Theorising the Practical Wisdom of Grassroots and Civil Society Peacebuilding in Northern Ireland (1965 to 2015)

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Thesis submitted to fulfil requirements for the degree
Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

May 2018

I confirm that the word count of this thesis is less than 100,000 words.

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Acknowledgements

There are many people whom I wish to acknowledge as having played an important role in the genesis, development and completion of this doctoral thesis. Firstly, I would like to thank my research supervisory team: Professor Duncan Morrow, Professor Brandon Hamber and Graínne Kelly. At every step of the research, their guidance, insight, critique and support has been critical. Each member of the team brought unique strengths and perspectives that were useful and necessary. Their on-going support, along with others at Ulster University such as Jackie Reilly, became particularly important when I faced an unexpected medical condition that necessitated taking a leave of absence for six months. I want to publicly thank them not only for their academic mentorship, but their personal support.

Secondly, I wish to thank all the practitioners who participated in the field research by agreeing to be interviewed and attend theory-building workshops. Practitioners were generous with their time and as a result, interviewee data was extremely rich. Their wisdom affirmed for me the value of practitioner-based knowledge and the need for it to be used more routinely and purposefully to strengthen both peacebuilding theory and practice. My hope is that this thesis can, in some way, contribute to that increased knowledge exchange.

Finally, I wish to thank my family and friends who have each played different but important roles helping me to cross the milestones of the doctoral marathon. My extended circle of friends stepped up on multiple occasions to offer play dates and extra school runs to give me time to write. My mother Jane Stanton and my father Robert Stanton each showcased their own academic prowess and were diligent in proofing both my ideas and the written thesis chapters. My two boys, Liam and Rhys cheered me on when I got discouraged, and gracefully accepted my disappearances at weekends to allow me to write without interruption. Last but not least, I want to thank my husband Hedley. Not only has he shown practical support by taking on all domestic and childcare responsibilities, but his patience and understanding has been enduring as I worked to complete the dissertation.

Abstract

Scholars and practitioners increasingly advocate that attention be paid to 'bottom-up' grassroots and civil society peacebuilding to ensure legitimacy, relevance and sustainability. Northern Ireland is well positioned to add insights from its own 50-year history of bottom-up efforts. However, despite its length and a substantial financial investment from donors, knowledge from practical peacebuilding has been underutilised. Local practitioners have, instead, been described in academic literature as lacking in strategy and coherence. Seeking to address this gap, this research, using a qualitative inductive approach, investigated what peacebuilders have learned from their 'applied' practice spanning the years 1965-2015.

Insights from the research findings were found to echo scholarly debates about knowledge production for peace, such as: "Whose knowledge counts? "What kind of knowledge matters?" Critical peace scholars, identifying a 'technocratic turn' in 'liberal' peacebuilding, argue that it privileges international actors and thematic knowledge over local actors and local knowledge. In Northern Ireland peacebuilding was locally-led; however, tensions associated with professionalisation remain and at times, are viewed to subordinate practical knowledge.

This thesis argues that grassroots and civil society peacebuilders hold valid and valuable knowledge but to understand, explain and maximise its use - an epistemological rediscovery is necessary. The Aristotelian term, phronesis (practical wisdom) is adopted as an explanatory frame and conceptualised as a form of nuanced context-knowledge gained by experience. Phronesis was evidenced in the fieldwork data as necessary to lever, lubricate and catalyse social change. As a conceptual frame, its salience for knowledge production was proven by: adding explanatory power; as a source for innovation; and for theory building. Importantly, phronesis also amplifies debates demonstrating why 'local' knowledge is necessary for peacebuilding relevancy. This thesis concludes that evidence demonstrates the importance of the conceptualisation of phronesis for expanding current scholarship on bottom-up, grassroots and civil society peacebuilding in Northern Ireland and internationally.

List of Abbreviations

ACT- All Children Together

CAJ- Committee for the Administration of Justice

CDC- Community Development Centre

CfND- Centre for Neighbourhood Development

CFNI- Community Foundation for Northern Ireland

CNR- Catholic/Nationalist/ Republican

CRC- Community Relations Council

CSJ- Campaign for Social Justice

DWP- Derry Women for Peace

EMU- Education for Mutual Understanding

HTR- Healing Through Remembering

INGO- International Non-governmental Organisation

INLA- Irish National Liberation Army

IRA- Irish Republican Army

MNI- Mediation Northern Ireland

NGO- Non-governmental Organisation

NIACRO- Northern Ireland Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders

NICRA- Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association

OIRA-Official Irish Republican Army

PACE- Protestant and Catholic Encounter

PIRA- Provisional Irish Republican Army

PRG- Peace and Reconciliation Group

PSNI- Police Service of Northern Ireland

PUL-Protestant/Unionist/ Loyalist

QPEP- Quaker Peace Education Project

RUC- Royal Ulster Constabulary

UDA- Ulster Defence Association

UVF- Ulster Volunteer Force

VSS- Victim and Survivors Service

WAVE- Women Against Violence Everywhere

WT- Women Together

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"As we attempt to analyse dialogue as a human phenomenon, we discover something which is the essence of dialogue itself: the word… Within the word we find two dimensions, reflection and action, in such radical interaction that if one is sacrificed-even in part- the other immediately suffers. There is no true word that is not at the same time a praxis. Thus to speak a true word is to transform the world."

(Freire, P. 1970 p.75)

Prologue: episteme, techne but no phronesis

The small, stuffy office was overcrowded and dim with one frosted window overlooking the school playground. Three chairs were squeezed awkwardly in the corner – two facing each other and the third in between – an attempt to mimic textbook mediation seating arrangements. One in each chair, two girls 'Kerry' and 'Jenny' sat eyeing each other warily. Nervous but excited, the newly minted mediator, armed with a 'toolbox' of theories and skills and a master's degree in conflict transformation, sat down and smiled. Having spoken with each girl separately on several occasions and already obtained their agreement to meet face-to-face, the mediator reminded both girls of the 'rules.' *Don't interrupt, each person will get a chance to tell their own side of the story, after each person has spoken there will be a chance to ask questions and look for joint solutions.* The structure of how the dialogue *should* go was clear.

"Who would like to begin?" the mediator asks innocently. Kerry's voice was loud and accusatory. "Miss, it's all **her** fault, she was slabbering behind my back to all the girls and telling them I fancied John, but I don't and..." Her story was cut off mid-sentence by a strong rebuttal from Jenny. "Wise up ya wee tart! I never was slabbering about youse, I don't give a toss about who"… "Ya were! Ya wee slabbering liar!" Kerry volleyed back. The mediator used her 'stern' voice, at pains to remember what she had learned about which techniques to employ when emotions peaked. "Now girls, listen. We went over all this, you have to *listen* to each other first." Panic set in. The girls paid no attention to the mediator and continued their row, voices becoming louder and louder in the tiny room as the speed of the conflict accelerated to breakneck. "That's it! I'm not staying here and listening to this wee slabbering tart! I'm leaving!" Making a dramatic exit, Jenny stormed from the room, sped down the hall and, without glancing back, marched through the front door and out of the school. The mediator, having run after her, lingered at the door and watched helplessly and wordlessly at the girl's retreating back.

Personal background to the research

I first came to Northern Ireland in 1992 from the United States as part of an academic programme sponsored by my small Quaker university's peace studies department. We lived in Derry-Londonderry for the first three months (we were advised, of course, to recognise its name was contested), moving on later to Ulster University's Jordanstown campus for the remaining three months. The purpose of the academic programme was to explore peace studies from the perspective of those living in conflict, and to learn from organisations engaged in grassroots peacebuilding. I still have my personal journal and all my academic notes taken during that six-month period. Looking back from 2017, twenty-five years later, my first impressions remind me how much life in Northern Ireland has changed. The cringe-worthy accounts of the angst of my 21 year-old self is peppered with my impressions of local people, their stories and about life as I found it over those six months.

In my journal reflections I found accounts of some of the tragic events that unfolded. For example, eight construction workers were killed in a roadside bomb at Teebane near the town of Cookstown in County Tyrone soon after our arrival. It also included my discomfort and alarm at meeting heavily armed soldiers as I rounded a corner, and on hearing a bomb explode. Yet, daily I was surprised at the friendliness, openness and curiosity extended to us as a group of 'outsiders.' Life for the city residents had, despite conflict, a rhythm of the ordinary life. My journal excerpts recall exploits: pub hopping, singing karaoke, and having great 'craic'. Such experiences were interwoven in parallel with late night conversations with local students about life in Northern Ireland, or experiences in confrontations with the army. I journalled about my host, a single-mother raising three children, who wondered whether she would stay in Northern Ireland because she wasn't sure she wanted her children growing up in conflict. The paradox of normalcy among the abnormal was illustrated soon after we had arrived. Driving past a heavily fortified Army vehicle called Saracens, one of our local hosts remarked that she didn't even notice them anymore, she had "gotten used to it." From the vantage of today,

nearly twenty-five years later, I can see now that what I was observing in Derry-Londonderry was a level of conflict fatigue, and perhaps a necessary immunity to living in a context of protracted violence and conflict, yet also an attempt to resist the oppressive nature of daily tragedy.

Set amongst this set of paradoxical circumstances, I came to know, work amongst, and become deeply involved, with a surprisingly vibrant civil society at the community level. Reflecting on my journal entries and documents that I have saved from that period of time in 1992, I recognise many names who were involved in civil society social peacebuilding and social change projects that are still active today in peacebuilding, if not at the same level. In those early days I watched, eager to learn what was happening on the ground and how it 'fit' into my peace studies academic training. When my undergraduate studies were completed I returned to Northern Ireland to work for a year as a volunteer at the Corrymeela Community, a long-standing reconciliation organisation. The announcement of ceasefires came during my year on placement- a deeply emotional moment for the local volunteers with whom I was working. My motivation to learn enhanced by the year of intense dialogue and group work, I pursued a master's degree in conflict transformation. I aimed to both increase my own skill level, and find a theoretical home for the practice I had observed and learned while working in Northern Ireland. With my expanded 'toolkit' I returned once again to Northern Ireland and since 2009 have continued to work as a practitioner within grassroots peacebuilding projects as a facilitator and trainer.

In many respects, this research question has been living in me for the last twenty-five years. Consequently, I recognise that I am intimately imprinted into this research in deeper ways than I may even be aware. While I view myself as both an outsider and an insider, I recognise that role has changed over the years. For example, having married locally and now raising a family here, I have increasingly become over time more embedded within Northern Ireland. While my experience is subjective and informs my perspective of the shape of the landscape, I believe this view has given me a useful vantage point for generating insights and observations

over the last twenty-five years. Likewise, my own oscillation between theory and practice is woven within this thesis and reflects my own experiences. After acquiring my 'toolkit' of skills in mediation and conflict analysis, my intention was to put such skill into practice- instead I found them to be incomplete. The episode described in the prologue was based on my own experience trying to mediate in a local secondary school situated along one of the contested 'interfaces' in North Belfast.

As I reflect on myself as an outside intervener in Northern Ireland, what is now more clear to me is that my challenges (such as the example in the prologue) were not entirely based on being an 'outsider.' What was problematic was my adherence to the learned mediation 'technique' which in hindsight obscured my ability to make a good judgement about what form of intervention was needed in that particular situation. I had theories, skills and yet I was still missing a necessary form of knowledge. Gained by experience and guided by multiple ways of 'knowing,' this knowledge might have helped increase my ability to judge the nuances of the particular context for action- knowledge which I have now come to know as practical wisdom or phronesis.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background

In his seminal book *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies* John Paul Lederach (1997), a leading peacebuilding practitioner-academic, was one of the first in his field to begin to articulate a premise that, in order for protracted social conflict to be transformed, peacebuilding initiatives needed to involve multiple levels of society working across all lines of division. Since then, this understanding has gained significant traction within peacebuilding scholarly research, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) working in conflict areas, and those working to influence policy within a post-conflict society. A body of scholarly literature has begun to develop which focuses specifically on the necessity for, and impact of, grassroots and civil society peacebuilding as an important contribution toward a more comprehensive, integrated, locally owned, and sustainable peace (Diamond and McDonald, 1996; Lederach, 1997; Fitzduff, 2002; Schirch, 2004; Zelizer and Rubenstein, 2009; Donais, 2009; 2012; Zelizer, 2013). As a result there is now a greater appreciation for the importance of embedding any negotiated peace agreement within a society that is likely to accept and support peace on the ground. In this respect, Northern Ireland has much to offer to illustrate or test this theory, since 'bottom up' initiatives to build peace have operated at the grassroots level and within civil society for more than 50 years despite and throughout years of protracted conflict and violence.

Attempting to provide background to the conflict in Northern Ireland is a daunting task. Unsurprisingly, both its cause and consequences is a source of dispute and can be said to traced back as early as 831 CE with the invasion of Vikings or as recently as 1968-1969 depending on where one chooses to start. Furthermore, it is not only the conflict time frame that is a matter of dispute; the conflict's very nature is similarly contested and considered to include multiple saliently divisive dimensions including those which are theological, economic, cultural, political and ethnic (McGarry and O'Leary, 1995).

McMaster (1994), in exploring the roots of division between Catholic and Protestant communities in Northern Ireland makes several key points, which offers a view into this complex and contradictory conflict narrative (McMaster, 1994 pp. 3-20). McMaster writes that the arrival of Anglo-Normans in the 1100's came at the bequest of the deposed Irish King Dermot MacMurragh, and highlights that Henry II, then king of England, came to Ireland with Pope Adrian IV's blessing, investing him with the right to rule Ireland. However, during the next several centuries, the desire to preserve the power base of the English Protestant church and state in a wider context of European power struggles played out in Ireland through the plantation of Ulster of 1609, the native uprising of 1641 and Cromwell's reprisal, and the Williamite wars of the 1690s -often to the detriment of native Irish Catholic populations (ibid).

Penal Laws established after the Williamite wars and not fully repealed until 1829 institutionalised discrimination against Catholics barring them from land ownership, freedom of worship, Catholic education, and the holding of public office. While some of these laws also adversely affected Presbyterians, McMaster argues that the discrimination of the Penal Laws for Catholics effectively served to create an association between Protestants, ascendency and British rule (ibid, p. 11). Darby (1983) describes of the Penal Laws:

> "[t]heir main effects were to entrench the divide between Catholics and Protestants, to strengthen Irish Catholicism by adding a political component to it, and to drive underground some aspects of the Catholic Gaelic culture notably education and public worship" (Darby, 1983 p.16).

Political reforms that overturned the institutionalised discrimination were not to emerge until the late 1790's and after the Catholic Emancipation Act of 1829. Agitation against discrimination was not the sole domain of native Catholics. There was also disenchantment from Presbyterians who, although not as comprehensively, also suffered political discrimination as they were barred by the Penal Laws from holding public office. The cause for independence from Britain found common support in the 1790's -albeit a short-lived one- as a unifying issue for both radical Presbyterians and fellow Catholics. This alliance led to the forming

of the Society of United Irishmen and the joining of forces in the rebellion of 1798. Its subsequent failure, however, ended such endeavours; judicial investigations of the rebellious Presbyterian clergy led to three hangings and seven imprisoned (Boyd cited in Darby, 1983, p. 16). The short-lived alliance was instead replaced by a re-aligned relationship between Presbyterians and the ruling Anglican Protestants (McMaster, 1994). However, tensions over land ownership and self-determination would continue. McMaster outlines that:

> "[T]he first half of the [19th] century was dominated by Daniel O'Connell's campaign for Catholic emancipation and for the repeal of the union…(t)he second was dominated by agrarian agitation and unrest and the demand for Home Rule" (McMaster, 1994 p. 14).

All Ireland tensions were furthered by the economic prosperity of the north of the island as it benefited from an enhanced industrial relationship with Britain (Darby, 1983 p.18). Darby suggests this served to further separate the southern from the northern parts of Ireland; for example, the potato famine of the 1840s had a much greater impact with far greater consequences in the former than the latter. Northern industrial prosperity was by and large controlled and of greatest benefit to Protestant communities (McKittrick and McVea, 2012, p. 2). As the 19th century drew to a close increased pressure for 'Home Rule' for Ireland generated alarm among Protestant Unionists in Ulster who, according to authors McKittrick and McVea, viewed it as a threat to the union with Britain fearing it would lead to Irish independence and an end to their ascendancy (ibid, p. 3). Two 'Home Rule' bills introduced in Britain during the early part of the 20th century were diverted by the onset of World War I but agitation both for and against the possibility of more political autonomy for Ireland remained. For example, the Ulster Volunteer Force, a Protestant militia was formed in anticipation of having to defend the right to remain part of the union. Instead, their military training was redirected towards service in the British Army fighting in World War I - and is particularly associated with the Battle of the Somme of 1916.

In Ireland with Home Rule put on hold, the Easter of 1916 saw a small group of Republicans in Dublin stage an armed rebellion against continued British rule. While

quickly quelled, it was the public execution of its leaders- considered an overreaction by the British- that galvanised local support (McKittrick and McVea, 2012). The newly formed Irish Republican Army began an armed guerrilla campaign against the British state over the next several years that led to the eventual partition of the island of Ireland and the first Northern Ireland parliament elected in 1921. Northern Ireland was to include six of the nine traditional counties of the historical province of Ulster- divided so as to maintain a Protestant majority (Darby, 1983).

The newly formed Northern Ireland state was "born amid bloodshed and communal disorder" (Darby, 1983 p.21) and for the first few years, remained fractious. Protestant Unionists, two-thirds of the population at the time, became the majority against a Catholic minority. Politically, Unionism dominated Northern Ireland for the next fifty years and established a hegemonic grip in particular through gerrymandering and abolishing proportional representation in local councils. Economic deprivation was more acutely felt among Catholic communities who faced employment discrimination; for example, during the period of Unionist-dominated government, only 10% of the civil service was Catholic (McKittrick and McVea, 2013 p.13). In addition to Nationalist views rejecting partition, discrimination in employment, housing and voting rights would form the bedrock of grievances Catholic communities held for the Unionist controlled government of Northern Ireland. These fault lines would erupt in the early sixties as discriminatory practices were highlighted and surfaced by civil rights activists advocating for social reform. Non-violent civil rights marches were opposed, occasionally violently, by Loyalist counter-protests and excessive force used by police in managing the marching. Unionist politicians were divided among themselves on political reforms (ibid, pp.48-49). As a result, a view was reinforced among many local Catholics that the state was unwilling to reform.

Turbulent communal unrest saw British soldiers arrive to re-establish order. However, they would soon become protagonists in the conflict against a re-engaged Official Irish Republican Army (OIRA) and latterly the Provisional Republican Army's (PIRA) armed campaign in the early 1970's. Loyalist paramilitaries also became

galvanised by the eruption of what they viewed as a 'terrorist campaign" viewing their own violence as a necessary defence to protect their own communities. The protracted conflict would stretch on in low-intensity communal and ethnic violence over the next twenty-five years. Leaving a legacy of over 3700 deaths (McKittrick and McVea, 2012) and over 47,000 injured from 1969-2003 (CAIN, 2018), the armed conflict was brought to an end following the ceasefires of armed combatants in 1994-1995 and political negotiations leading to the signing of the Good Friday Peace Agreement in 1998. Since 1998, while conflict related violence has largely been ameliorated-the region remains deeply contested with a continued legacy of communal division. Post conflict power-sharing, part of the political solution offered by the Good Friday Agreement, can be characterised as stop-start. The Northern Ireland Executive, at the time of writing is currently suspended- and political power-sharing has appeared, in many ways, to have had a polarising influence between those who support the reunification of the island of Ireland and those that seek to remain part of the United Kingdom.

Despite its power-sharing difficulties, Northern Ireland continues to be held out as an example of successful conflict transformation. Those seeking to evaluate Northern Ireland, however, predominately focus on the political peace and scholarship has largely bypassed 'bottom up' grassroots and civil society's role, or instead tied it to its political impact. Scholars who have analysed it have identified its importance primarily in the lead-up to the political negotiations of the Good Friday Agreement-viewing it as positive, but primarily operating in the background, creating a climate conducive to negotiations (McCartney, 1999; Fitzduff, 2002; Cochrane, 2001a, 2001b, 2006; Cochrane and Dunn, 2002; Guelke, 2003).

Despite the lack of scholarly attention, practical initiatives to tackle communal discord and animosity have operated within communities and in civil society, as mentioned earlier, for over 50 years. In particular, these efforts expanded after Republican and Loyalist ceasefires in 1994 and the Good Friday Agreement signed in 1998, when the European Union and other philanthropists pledged peace and reconciliation funds aimed at supporting peace at the community level. A recent

report produced by the Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action (NICVA) found that out of a total of 6,127 voluntary groups, 495 continue to consider community relations, one kind of peacebuilding, as a main area of work (NICVA, 2015). Funds to support peacebuilding, while recently experiencing contraction, have overall represented a significant financial investment. For example, total funding allocated for Northern Ireland and the six border counties by the Special Programme for Peace and Reconciliation from Peace I-IV (spanning years 1995-2020) will total €2.265 billion (Wilson, 2016). Given its population of 1.8 million people these funds can be considered an impressive financial contribution to Northern Ireland.

This investment has been influential in facilitating the emergence of a local professionalised field of peacebuilding, bringing the potential to harness innovation and creativity and to become a testing ground to build local practice-informed theory. However, while organisations may maintain internal reports, there is a notable absence of evidence of lessons learned from this practice in the broader academic literature in the field of conflict transformation and peace studies (Stanton and Kelly, 2015; Kelly and Braniff, 2016). While peacebuilding practice has been influenced by theory generated locally (Wilson, 1990; Eyben et al, 1997; Bloomfield, 1997; Fitzduff, 1992,1993, 2002; Liechty and Clegg, 2001; Hamber and Kelly, 2004; Craig 2005) with limited exceptions, these have emerged from academia rather than directly and inductively derived from practice.

When considering reasons for the absence of locally-built practice-generated theory, several possible explanations emerge. Firstly, academics have described a lack of clarity and coherency about peacebuilding practice (Cochrane, 2001b; Cochrane and Dunn, 2002; Kelly, 2012). Cochrane (2001b) and Cochrane and Dunn (2002) purport that practitioners involved with peacebuilding in Northern Ireland have lacked a strategic approach, and Kelly (2012) and Kelly and Braniff (2016) note that there has been a lack of organisational learning and clarity about what interventions or methodologies have been effective. Given contractions in funding experienced by the sector over the more recent years as international philanthropic

grant-making reduces its involvement in Northern Ireland (Wilson, 2016), there is further concern that any organisational learning that has been acquired is increasingly at risk of being lost due to lack of current documentation and dissemination (Kelly and Braniff, 2016). A second possible explanation for the absence of practitioner-based theory development is that there is an undervaluing of practical knowledge as a source of knowledge creation. Exacerbated by knowledge hierarchies which privilege research over practice and bureaucratic technocratic forms of knowledge, peacebuilding practice in Northern Ireland is increasingly viewed as service delivery, rather than as a location for learning or knowledge building (Stanton and Kelly, 2015).

This trend is particularly problematic when Northern Ireland is held up as a model of positive conflict transformation and yet, simultaneously, contains significant dimensions left unresolved. Practical knowledge, if harnessed, could be used to help secure ambitious social policy goals, for example, to bring peace walls down by 2023 as outlined in Together: Building a United Community (The Executive Office, 2013 p.6) and to pursue remaining difficult and sensitive unresolved conflict legacies. Kelly and Braniff argue that in order for such learning to become prioritised by funders, policy-makers, academics, and by practitioners themselves, what is needed is a "*paradigm shift* in how practitioners' knowledge and experience is valued and utilized" (Kelly and Braniff, 2016 p.21).

From the outset, this research hypothesised that practitioners involved in peacebuilding at the grassroots level and within civil society had gained valuable and valid usable knowledge through their efforts living and working to build peace in a context of protracted violent conflict, and that a deeper examination would reveal that a significant understanding of applied peacebuilding practice had been developed, including factors necessary for change. The research question asked:

> *"What have actors working at the grassroots level and within civil society initiatives learned as a result of their peacebuilding and conflict transformation practice, and what might this knowledge add to current peacebuilding theory and practice locally and globally?"*

It aimed to address this knowledge gap by interviewing forty 'reflective practitioners' (Lederach et al, 2007 and defined in Chapter 5) who had worked between the years of 1965 to 2015 to build peace and transform conflict primarily at a grassroots and within civil society in Northern Ireland. This investigation has defined grassroots and civil society activity to include those working within and between grassroots communities, but it also included activities undertaken by actors affiliated with civil society NGOs who, at times, were involved in peacebuilding activity that Lederach refers to as middle-range (Lederach, 1997). Both the terms grassroots and civil society are explored as they are understood within the peacebuilding literature in Chapter 2. The timeframe 1965-2015 was chosen to trace the development of peacebuilding in Northern Ireland against the cycle of conflict. The sixties were chosen as a beginning point because the social change momentum during this time saw both formal and informal efforts made by grassroots and civil society to surface structural injustices and to promote greater social and communal reconciliation and integration. During the latter part of the decade, as the armed conflict began to be formed and to escalate, sustained grassroots efforts were also employed to try to de-escalate the growing conflict. The end point of 2015 was chosen to consider learning and practice development over a period of 50 years inclusive of a post-Agreement and power-sharing context. The arc of this development of peacebuilding covering this 50-year period of time will be a topic more illustrated fully in Chapter 4.

It was viewed that knowledge gained from the research might positively impact practice, policy and academia by: 1) addressing the concerns over peacebuilding coherency in order to strengthen both practice and social policy implementation; and 2) making a contribution to peacebuilding theory by building experience-based and practice-informed theories directly with practitioners. Practice-based theory was viewed as important not only to close knowledge gaps, but also to equip future practitioners with robust theory more adequately suited to addressing the complexities of building sustainable peace and transforming violent conflict particularly within grassroots communities and within civil society.

1.2 Knowledge for peacebuilding

As the research process unfolded, insights emerged which opened up new understanding, and consequently moved the direction of the research in unanticipated ways. The first discovery emerged out of a convergence of the literature reviews undertaken during the first year, creating new ideas and research pathways. Three initial literature reviews were undertaken. The first review focused on peacebuilding theory development including those concerned with approaches described as bottom-up, grassroots and within civil society. A second review covered Northern Ireland peacebuilding practice in order to understand its development. The third literature review covered dimensions of knowledge creation. Collectively, there was a similarity to the debates arising within the literature. Of particular resonance were arguments that concerned *whose knowledge was considered valuable, and what types of knowledge counted* within professionalised peacebuilding theory and practice.

To summarise, peace theory literature (which I review extensively in Chapter 2) highlighted tensions that have emerged over the applied practice of peacebuilding. Associated primarily with scholars from a 'critical peace' tradition, the debate centres on how the international practice of peacebuilding has been instrumentalised by the United Nations and other global bodies. Viewing such practices as promoting a 'liberal peace,' the literature suggests interventions are dominated by western institutions intent on embedding neo-liberal economic and social norms through interventions in the name of state building and democracy. Critics identify concerns about liberal peace for a variety of reasons, for example: that it adopts a universalised template and a generic approach (Mac Ginty, 2006); that it disempowers locally-based peacebuilders and impacts local ownership (Donais, 2009, 2012; Mac Ginty, 2013); that it obscures the macro-micro dynamics of localised regional disputes and their role in a national conflict (Odendaal, 2013); and privileges thematic and technical knowledge over local knowledge (Autessere, 2014).

However, the critical peace school has likewise been criticised for its wariness of globalised forms of peacebuilding intervention suggesting that this has resulted in a broader ambivalence about the merits of peacebuilding practice (Paffenholz, 2015). Suggesting it may be throwing the 'liberal peace' baby out with the bathwater, scholars advocate instead that focus should include ways international practice might be reformed (Paris, 2010). Locally led solutions have been described as the antidote to addressing the worst excesses of the liberal peace. However, scholars also noted that 'local knowledge' faces difficulties in being taken seriously. Hellmüller (2014) eloquently describes that local knowledge, even when it is utilised by international non-governmental organisations (INGOs), is not viewed as valuable *knowledge* or deemed instrumental to guiding appropriate action, but as only as *information*.

When investigating the literature on peacebuilding at the grassroots level and within civil society in Northern Ireland, it revealed there were permutations of some of these same questions: *whose knowledge is valid and what kind of knowledge is valuable* for peacebuilding? Primarily peacebuilding in Northern Ireland has been locally led, but tensions remained evident in discussions of its applied practices, and its overall value and contribution. Literature reflects ambivalence about whether civil society in Northern Ireland can be a location for peacebuilding when it is so deeply entrenched within, and reflective of, sectarian division (Belloni, 2010; Acheson et al, 2011). Other scholars suggest that the notion of 'civil society peacebuilding' is a misnomer given the dependence of voluntary sector NGOs on governmental sources for funding (Knox and Quirk, 2000). For those who suggest civil society in Northern has played a role in peacebuilding, the majority focus primarily on its impact on the political process. This is characterised in muted tones, not altogether unimportant- especially when playing a 'stretcher bearing role' during decades of high violence (Cochrane, 2001; Cochrane and Dunn, 2002; McCartney, 1999). Scholars note that civil society involvement was important also for generating democratic debate prior to the Good Friday Agreement during Initiative '92 and when securing a 'Yes' vote during the subsequent referendum (Guelke, 2003; Mac Ginty and Darby, 2002).

However, tensions were also evident in the literature on peacebuilding practice in Northern Ireland, with claims made it had become increasingly bureaucratic and technocratic, particularly after the expansion of international grant aid from the EU and the United States beginning in the latter half of the nineties (Byrne et al. 2008; Atashi, 2011; Hall, 2013). Literature revealed that increasingly professionalisation had compromised local grassroots volunteerism and at times, local relevancy (Atashi, 2011). Compounding this, as the sector contracted organisations working steadily since the early days of conflict increasingly lost funding and key personnel. Evidence suggested that practical peacebuilding knowledge was not being well captured, documented, or disseminated- neither validated nor valorised (Kelly and Braniff, 2016).

Finally, the third literature review undertaken to inform the research question focused on theories and debates on the topic of knowledge production. This review was useful to consider why practical knowledge might be under-utilised and to determine its potential for building theory, an explicit aim of the research design. Scholars writing on professional practice were explored in order to conceptualise what practitioners might bring to theory-building for the research design and to begin to theorise practical knowledge (Argyls and Schön, 1974; Schön, 1983, 1987; Eraut, 1994, 2000, 2009). While exploring this literature, one article produced by scholars affiliated with the School of Urban Studies at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) was, unexpectedly, to become pivotal to the research and the production of this thesis. Advocating that in order to address real world problems, urban planners must collaborate with practitioners the article argued theory and practice were unnecessarily pitted against each other:

> "We would argue that such a division between theory builders and practitioners is, at best, false and at worst malicious…The integration of the type of knowledge that arises from research that is 'formal' and taught in academic institutions, with the type of knowledge that resides in the work and minds of local practitioners, is critical for improving society because it brings together two complementary views of the world (McDowell et al, 2005 p. 30)."

Eager to learn more of the work being done at MIT, research investigating the Urban Studies curriculum proved to be an important next step-the discovery of the reference to Flyvbjerg's (2001) *Making Social Science Matter*. This book, authored by urban studies scholar Bent Flyvbjerg, now based at Saïd School of Business at the University or Oxford, introduced a concept of knowledge that was to become central to this thesis. Flyvbjerg's text, while primarily a critique of the "science wars" (natural science versus social science), centrally argues that these two sciences are each suited to different 'virtues' of knowledge and should not be pitted against each other (Flyvbjerg, 2001). He advances the argument by introducing Aristotelian 'virtues' of knowledge to consider. *Episteme*, is described as being closest to 'scientific knowledge' and is considered context-independent, universally logical, rational, predictive and explanatory. *Techne*, is referenced as artistic, craft or skill-based knowledge forms and the root of the modern words technical and technology. Finally, a third virtue of knowledge discussed was *phronesis* or practical knowledge or wisdom (also translated as prudence and common sense). Phronesis is described as a form of context-dependent knowledge used for practical action. Flyvbjerg notes that while episteme and techne have modern derivations, phronesis has been lost from modern lexicon (Flyvbjerg, 2001). Nonetheless, Flyvbjerg argues that phronesis is the virtue of knowledge for which the social sciences should aspire, and for which he argues, it is better suited. Able to produce the kind of knowledge for action and for a particular specific case, as he states: "Phronesis is the intellectual activity most relevant to praxis" (Flyvjberg, 2001 p.57).

Flyvjberg's investigation of phronesis intersected with reflective practice literature. Describing practitioners who have learned to navigate the world of complexity, Schön (1983), while not using the word phronesis described similar context-driven knowledge. Gained from experience in "swampy lowland where situations are confusing messes incapable of technical solution," these locations demanded that practitioners learned from experience and trial and error (Schön, 1983 pp.42-43). Weaving together insights from Schön with Flyvjberg, phronesis began to take shape as a form of experience-based practical knowledge gained about how to make judgements in a 'particular' situation deemed necessary in shifting, complex and unstable contexts.

1.3 Conceptualising phronesis

Phronesis was viewed as potentially illuminating in two different ways. Firstly, it described the type of knowledge that conceivably those working within the grassroots level and within civil society may have gained as a result of their experiences situated in the context of complexity, uncertainty and instablity endemic to protracted violent conflicts. Secondly, it suggested itself as a macro-conceptual framework that might validate this type of practical, context-derived knowledge as important in its own right.

An intriguing question arose: if phronesis were recognised as a valid and valuable source of knowledge (as Aristotle believed), how might that affect peacebuilding both in theory and in practice? Conceptualising phronesis as a valid and valuable form of context-dependent knowledge could be useful for building an argument that practitioners and those who hold practical knowledge should be viewed as knowledge creators, and used in knowledge building for peace. Phronesis as a concept illuminated the type of knowledge generated from practice. Given its context-dependent nature, it might also generate useful, nuanced and relevant insights about a particular conflict context. The concept of phronesis was thus theorised for this purpose to serve as a conceptual underpinning for the research design to explain why practitioners should be involved in knowledge production.

However, the conceptualising of phronesis for peacebuilding covered in the thesis in Chapter 3, in many respects, opened up still more unexpected intellectual doors. In particular, by conceptualising phronesis for peacebuilding, it established a bridge back to the debates concerning local knowledge voiced from within the school of critical peace. In fact, phronesis, viewed as a form of context-dependent knowledge gained by lived experience, had the potential to bolster the concept of local knowledge so that it could less likely be dismissed as “information” (Hellmüller, 2014). Local knowledge instead might be better understood as including phronesis and thus viewed as valid and valuable knowledge for producing nuanced insights about context and ‘judgement of context’ for peacebuilding. Likewise, phronesis

might also intersect with recent scholarship on 'everyday' forms of peacebuilding, tying in with the idea that ordinary people living in divided societies learned ways to "navigate their passage through a deeply divided society" (Mac Ginty, 2014 p.549) with a view that this too may be a type of phronetic knowledge.

1.4 Evidence of phronesis

During the field research as will be discussed in Chapter 5, the interview questions focused primarily on stories of practice, asking practitioners to reflect on: their motivations for being involved in peacebuilding; influences on their practice; and stories of interventions-both what had worked and what was challenging. Stories allowed for a deeper interrogation of practice insights and, most importantly, it created the opportunity to ask why a particular intervention had either been challenging, or had worked well**.** It was the answers given to the question of **"***why***?"** that became the most revealing, illustrating judgement and a deep understanding about context. Furthermore, the question "*why*" illustrated a nuanced and ecological view of context including an understanding of particular places, history, symbolic and worldview frames and relationships. The ecological view illustrated an understanding of how these particulars interacted together, formed threats and created fault lines (terms which will be all defined fully in Chapter 6). As these dimensions of context took shape in the form of patterns, the data suggested that practitioners used phronesis and judgement-in-context-for-action in their peacebuilding practice.

However, the prevalence of the overall pattern and its evidence as significantly salient within the data became most clear as data analysis reached its conclusion (see Chapters 6 and 7). What emerged as a result was the finding that phronesis was more than just a kind of knowledge that might be generated from practice. In fact, phronesis could be viewed as an orienting epistemological position, with ontological dimensions which informed views and practices of grassroots and civil society peacebuilding, a finding which will be discussed in detail in Chapter 8. Data suggested phronesis was a primary source of knowledge utilised and deemed

important and necessary, to ensure relevancy for local peacebuilding. For this reason, the salience of phronesis became evident as a concept that held significant scope for knowledge creation and knowledge production for peacebuilding. In particular, as will be discussed in Chapter 8, phronesis added an explanatory power to better understand the role of grassroots and civil society peacebuilding. Furthermore, research suggested that phronesis had great potential as a source of knowledge creation: as a potential tool of analysis, by demonstrating its use for innovation; and also indicating potential for theory building. As a result, the thesis concludes by arguing that on the basis of evidence provided and elaborated throughout, phronesis is a useful concept that holds particular significance for affording better understanding of grassroots and civil society peacebuilding, and is a fruitful location for relevant knowledge production that yields valid and valuable forms of knowledge for peacebuilding.

1.5 The structure of the thesis

The thesis will unfold in the following manner: Chapter 2 serves as an introduction to the development of the main theoretical concepts within peace studies and then moves to significant debates relevant to the research question, particular those addressing knowledge production for peacebuilding. Chapter 3 introduces phronesis, and begins to conceptualise the term for peacebuilding using a multi-disciplinary set of literature. Literature was also explored in order to locate where the concept may best fit within the current academic peacebuilding literature. Chapter 4 looks at the historical account of grassroots and civil society peacebuilding practice in Northern Ireland over a fifty-year span of time (1965-2015). Its purpose is to both to demonstrate that such a body of activity exists, and to investigate what insights might be generated viewing the activity through the lens of phronesis. It concludes by determining whether new insights are generated about the role of peacebuilding at the grassroots and within civil society in Northern Ireland when viewed through this frame. Chapter 5 describes the research design and includes discussion of methodological influences and choices. Chapter 6 is the first of two chapters that will introduce the salient findings from fieldwork research

and analysis. It will begin by demonstrating the evidence of phronesis as an epistemology of practice. Building on from these findings, Chapter 7 next demonstrates from the data ways that phronetic knowledge was used by practitioners to progress social change. Chapter 8 is a discussion chapter that investigates the strengths and limitations on the findings and the utility of building the conceptual frame of phronesis for peacebuilding knowledge production. Finally, Chapter 9 concludes the thesis by asking what has this research contributed to the body of knowledge and considers what implications are generated for peacebuilding theory and practice both locally and globally.

Chapter 2: Literature review

Introduction

In order to inform the research, theoretical literature was examined to provide an understanding of the conceptual building blocks which frame the research question. In doing so, this chapter intends to survey the landscape to highlight significant ways in which both theoretical and practice development in peacebuilding have emerged and intersected and where this piece of research may sit within current debates. Given its focus on actors who have primarily worked within peacebuilding at the grassroots- level and within civil society, particular attention is paid to literature identifying key debates pertinent to those working at those levels to progress social change, which in the literature can at times be referred to as bottom-up peacebuilding. The chapter concludes with questions that such debates generate for the study and practice of peacebuilding and conflict transformation generally but which also frame the background to this thesis in particular.

2.1 The emergence of peace research

While the aspiration for peace could be considered timeless, the systematic investigation of conditions, processes and influencing factors in building peace has been a much more recent phenomenon. Emerging out of the height of Cold War anxieties, and increased by the development of nuclear weapons, social scientists in the late 1940s began to turn their attention towards the problems of war, its causes and consequences; and the human propensity towards violence as a means to resolve conflict. Academics such as Kenneth and Elise Boulding in the United States, and Johan Galtung, a Norwegian social scientist in Europe, were highly influential in shaping the development of what was first known as peace research, and would later become the academic field of peace studies (Miall et al, 1999).

One of Galtung's early significant contributions was to develop a wider definition of both the concepts of peace and violence, beyond those previously used. Galtung conceptualised peace in two ways, positive peace and negative peace. Negative peace was characterised as "the absence of organized violence" between peoples and groups, while positive peace was contrasted as a "pattern of cooperation and integration between major human groups" (Galtung, 1975 p. 29). Explaining that it is possible to have an absence of war without a state of positive peace, Galtung describes negative peace as a form of co-existence that lacks true cooperation and integration but exists without war (ibid). Galtung also redefines violence, stating, "violence is present when human beings are being influenced so that their actual somatic and mental realizations are below their potential realizations" (Galtung, 1975 p.110). Thus, violence was not only understood as a form of personal and direct physical harm referred to as direct violence, but also embedded within society through unjust and inequitable systemic domination which limited the potential development of individuals and groups as structural violence.

Expanding the concepts of peace and violence created several fundamental distinctions and played a pivotal role in the further development of the study of peace. Firstly, the conceptual development of positive peace and negative peace reflected that lack of violence or war was not necessarily an indicator of peace, or an indicator of a lack of conflict. Conflict and violence may exist within structures in latent forms and emerge in later stages as direct violence or manifest conflict. However, violence - whether structural or direct - can also be disaggregated from conflict, and conflicts can be resolved without using violence. Galtung's work has thus been important to the field as it has argued that peace research needs not only to focus on the manifestations of direct violence, but also to explore structures which have embedded violence through multiple forms of domination, marginalisation and isolation which prevents groups and individuals from reaching their full potential (Galtung, 1975).

These theoretical developments enabled future practitioners and academics to gain a better appreciation for the ways in which direct and structural violence play

interdependent functions, fuelled by the role of cultural violence, a concept Galtung used to explain how forms of direct and indirect violence come to be viewed as justified. Miall et al. (1999) describe this interrelationship as; "We end direct violence by changing conflict behaviours, structural violence by removing structural conditions and injustices, and cultural violence by changing attitudes" (Miall et al, 1999 p.15).

Galtung (1996) is also associated with the development of an analytical tool to distinguish how attitudes, behaviours, and what he initially calls conflicts but later refers to as contradictions, contribute to and become a culmination of conflict. These concepts illustrated intersecting areas of conflict; a contradiction between disputants escalates when attitudes and behaviours also are affected, and spirals back into greater and increased conflict. Galtung describes three different mechanisms that may serve as intervention: peacekeeping, which seeks to control the destructive behaviour; peace-making which seeks to transform attitudes and assumptions by "embedding the actors in a new formation"; and peacebuilding by engaging with the "contradiction at the root of the conflict formation" (Galtung, 1996 p.103). Peacebuilding, as articulated by Galtung, therefore implies an attempt at addressing the root of the issues at the heart of conflict. Ramsbotham (2007) summarising Galtung, describes the differences- peacekeeping aims to stop or reduce manifest violence associated with conflict through the intervention of military forces in an interpository role; peacemaking is directed at the use of mediation, negotiation, arbitration and conciliation to reconcile political differences or produce agreements, and peacebuilding is peaceful social change focused on social and economic reconstruction and development (Ramsbotham, 2007).

2.1.1 Conflict: management, resolution and transformation

Authors describe a similar but initially separate path on which the practice of conflict transformation developed (Kriesberg, 1997; Miall et al, 1999). The development of 'integrative-bargaining' pioneered by Mary Parker Follett within labour relations in the early 1940s is seen as influential in promoting a shift away

from zero-sum outcomes (Kriesberg, 1997). These ideas began to be adapted for use in national and international disputes with the help of those trained in third party intervention, in the form of mediation and problem-solving workshops. Coined Track II, these approaches were used "to describe methods of diplomacy that were outside the formal governmental system" (Diamond and McDonald, 1996 p. 1). Developed as an alternative to traditional Track I diplomacy, using academics initially instead of diplomats, and working with mid-level political actors in international conflict zones, 'problem-solving workshops' were perceived to be useful as they offered private, lower-profile opportunities for disputing parties to explore underlying positions and needs without losing face. Several academics were early pioneers of Track II approaches, for example, John Burton was one of the earliest to advance this approach in the late 1960s (Kelman, 1997; Rothman, 1998, Miall et al., 1999). Burton's problem-solving method was underpinned by his development of a theory of human needs influenced by his own work in the field of international relations. Burton argued that deep-rooted conflicts contained non-negotiable basic human needs (such as identity, security, and belonging) which needed to be met in order that conflicts are resolved. Any negotiation that failed to consider the underlying needs of disputants would likely fail. Problem-solving workshops became a method for uncovering underlying basic needs and, as needs are not necessarily mutually exclusive, it was believed that opportunities to meet needs in an integrative process may hold promise to unlock long-standing deep-rooted conflicts.

2.1.2 Protracted social conflicts and identity-based conflict theory

Burton's influence on the field has been significant and has been credited with the introduction of the theory of deep-rooted, protracted or intractable social conflict. Authors suggest Burton's ideas were the most important theoretical developments of that period and best characterise the type of conflict most prevalent in today's global context (Miall et al, 1999 p. 49). Each of the terms has theoretical roots heavily influenced by social psychology:

> "The term deep-rooted often refers to conflicts based on strife regarding the satisfaction of human needs by people sharing collective identities…the term protracted connotes simply long lasting, but often linked to ethnic or other identity-based conflict. The term intractable suggests never ending…those that are resistant to settlement" (Kriesberg, 1998 p.332).

Burton's contribution of theories of social psychology into the field of international relations (IR), has been described by Kelman as a necessary lens to explain what the realist or neorealist schools could not capture, believing any theory of IR that did not acknowledge social-psychological dimensions was incomplete (Kelman, 1997 p.192). Kelman argued that international conflict viewed through a social-psychological lens created a broadened understanding of international conflict as: "a process driven by collective needs and fears" (in contrast to simply calculated national interests as many realist theorists would posit), "an intersocietal process" (rather than merely interstate or intergovernmental), "a multi-faceted process of mutual influence" (not only a contest of coercive power) and finally "an interactive process with an escalatory, self-perpetuating dynamic, not merely a sequence of action and reaction by stable actors" (ibid, p.194).

Miall et al. (1999) view that Edward Azar's research on protracted social conflicts conducted throughout the 1970s and 1980s is also considered to have made a significant contribution to the development of a greater understanding of this new type of conflict. Azar identified that protracted conflicts often featured communal identities that were used to meet ontological needs for identity, security, and recognition (Miall et al., 1999 pp.72-74). The growing understanding of identity introduced by social psychology opened up interest in the relationships between adversaries, and how relationships might influence identity to become threatened in conflict: "When a conflict between or among parties involves a core sense of identity (and therefore predictability of the world) the conflict tends to be intractable" (Northrup, 1989, p.55). Critiquing many of the rationalist-oriented negotiation techniques at that time, Northrup argues that they neglected to consider the impact of identity, assuming that adversaries negotiated out of the same worldview.

Seeking to more fully explain factors that lead to intractability, Northup argued that intractability in identity-based conflicts was diminished when changes occur at the level of identity, particularly if they involve core aspects of identity related to the conflict. Interestingly she argued that conflicts involving parties with threatened identities are "highly unlikely" to be changed from within, or to be willing or able to cooperate to come to resolution (ibid, p.80). However, approaches that begin to build up relationships such as dialogue groups may have some impact over time if they are not perceived to directly threaten identity (ibid, p. 81).

Faced with growing inter-ethnic disputes at the end of the Cold War, these new insights and enlarged paradigms of understanding for handling conflict were viewed as necessary "new tools and frameworks" to inform interventions when addressing long-standing, ethnic or identity-based conflicts (Zelizer, 2013 p.6). As such, increasingly in the 1990s peacebuilding began to emerge as a field when such approaches were required to respond to shifts from inter-state to intra-state-based conflicts, for example in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Rwanda and in the Caucasus (ibid).

2.2 Lederach and sustainable peacebuilding

In the mid-1990s, terminology in the field began to expand in tandem with new conceptual developments, influenced in significant ways by the work of John Paul Lederach, a practitioner and latterly an academic. Lederach's ideas were significantly shaped by his experiences as a mediator in Central America in the 1980s, as well as experiences intervening in conflicts in Somalia, Colombia, Northern Ireland, and the Philippines, among others. This body of experience influenced him to adopt the terminology of conflict transformation instead of conflict resolution, which in his words, "may conceptually and subtly promote the impression that conflict is undesirable and should be eliminated or at least reduced" (Lederach, 1995 p.16). Conflict instead could be viewed as part of human life, with the potential to promote positive change, and not always necessarily destructive or violent (ibid, p.9).

Lederach (1995) proposed that conflict may emerge out of contexts of injustice which need to be addressed, and that a danger in conflict resolution was to paper over legitimate justice concerns: "If change increasing justice has not occurred because the root structural causes of conflict remain untouched, then reducing or eliminating the overt expression of conflict may be an exercise in co-optation" (ibid, p.16). Writing in 1995, Lederach attributes the term conflict transformation to others in the field (Kriesberg, 1989; Ruppesinghe, 1994; and Curle, 1991 as cited in Lederach, 1995 p. 17), advocating it as a more apt description of the dynamics of social conflict and the opportunity it presents to unearth root causes of conflict in order to produce positive social change outcomes.

Lederach acknowledges that his own conceptual development and understanding of conflict transformation built upon the work of Adam Curle, a British Quaker mediator and the founder of the University of Bradford's Department of Peace Studies (Lederach, 1997). Curle, influenced by Galtung, Boulding and his own experiences as a mediator, emphasised the importance of relationships as Woodhouse notes:

> "[I]t is this focus on relationships as the subject of peace which above all distinguishes and characterises his work… Peace was concerned then not with the containment of conflict, but pre-eminently with building relationships" (Woodhouse, 2010 p.3).

Lederach explicitly references Curle's 1971 model *Progression of conflict* in his own work and builds upon it to illustrate that conflict transformation may require that different roles are needed at different times in order for conflict to be transformed from latent conflict to sustainable peace (Lederach, 1995 p.13). Thus, at latent stages, advocacy may be needed to help educate and increase awareness of injustice and unpeaceful relationships in asymmetrical relations in order to help increase a balance of power; and forms of conflict may need to be created through non-violent advocacy to highlight the existence of injustice. However, once this awareness is achieved and relationships and power are in greater balance, dialogue, negotiation and mediation may be better utilised. Curle's model was helpful for Lederach:

> "[As] a paradigm for a long-term view of conflict, one that contemplates both a vision of where we are going and a multiplicity of activities to get us there…. and that the longer-longer term progression of conflict toward increased justice and peaceful relations must integrate and view these activities as necessary and mutually interdependent in the pursuit of just change and peaceful transformation" (Lederach, 1995 pp.14-15).

Fundamental to Lederach's understanding of conflict transformation concerned the need to simultaneously address systemic, personal and relational change by tackling root causes and overt expressions of conflict, and, at the same time, increase justice, reduce violence and restore relationships through a multiplicity of approaches, variety of activities and operating at all levels of society.

2.2.1 Outsider interveners, elicitive approaches and local knowledge

Another key component of Lederach's approach to conflict transformation that differed at the time from many of the problem-solving methods within the conflict resolution school was new ideas about the role of the intervener within conflict. Lederach (1995) described that through his international practice he found that North American models of mediation and conflict resolution, particularly the role of the 'neutral outsider' was a role more culturally aligned to Western societies. However, in Latin America he found that disputants favoured what he termed an 'insider-partial mediator,' led by those who were already known and trusted by each of the parties (Wehr and Lederach, 1991).

These practice-gained insights generated new thinking about how to work across different cultural traditions using an elicitive rather than prescriptive approach (Lederach, 1995 p.7). This was important, he argued, in order to build on the indigenous or pre-existing cultural understandings of conflict and peace (ibid). Drawing heavily on the work of Paolo Freire and popular education, Lederach took the view that training or intervention approaches could and should be emancipatory and dialectical rather than one way. Importantly, local people are resources whose knowledge should be valued. Summarising his central ideas on this topic, he states:

> 1) People in their setting are a key resource, not recipients
> 2) Indigenous knowledge is a pipeline to discovery, meaning, and appropriate action
> 3) Participation of local people in the process is central
> 4) Building from available local resources fosters self-sufficiency and sustainability
> 5) Empowerment involves a process that fosters awareness-of-self in context and validates discovery, naming and creation through reflection and action
> (Lederach, 1995 p.31).

Lederach's approach to intervention facilitated a new understanding of ways to address conflict with those from within the conflict-setting, using their implicit knowledge and experiences of social conflict as described using their own language and metaphors. Elicitive approaches utilised the trainer as a catalyst rather than as an expert (Lederach, 1995, pp. 55-62). Importantly, Lederach's text emphasised that while there was a role for an outsider to play in intervening in conflict, his development of the elicitive training model prioritised the necessity to both value and use 'local' culture and knowledge. This theoretical development is what Paffenholz refers to as the 'first local turn' (Paffenholz, 2015).

2.2.2 Strategic, integrated and multi-tracked approaches to peacebuilding

Lederach's (1997) next text *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies* built upon his earlier work defining conflict transformation and expanded it by introducing his conceptualisation of the term peacebuilding. Lederach distinguishes his own perspective from that of Boutros-Boutros Ghali's 1992 *Agenda for Peace*, and rather than viewing peacebuilding as post-accord, defines it as:

> "[A] comprehensive concept that encompasses, generates, and sustains the full array of processes, approaches, and stages needed to transform conflict toward more sustainable, peaceful relationships. The term thus involves a wide range of activities and functions that both precede and follow formal peace accords. Metaphorically, peace is seen not merely as a stage in time or a condition. It is a dynamic social construct" (Lederach, 1997 p.20).

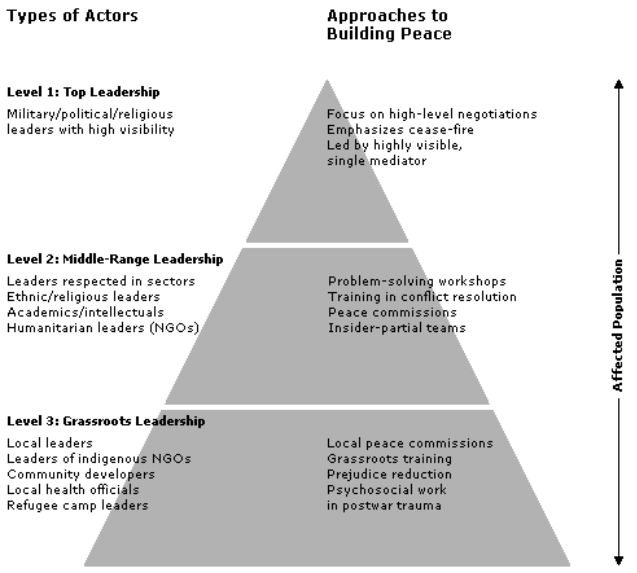
Lederach's work contributed to a conversation beginning to surface that sought to move beyond a view of either top-down or bottom-up peacebuilding. This added to

a growing body of literature on multiple forms of diplomacy known as 'multi-track' as developed the previous year by Diamond and McDonald (1996). Multi-track diplomacy expanded peace activities beyond Track I and II to include nine different tracks: business, private citizens, research, training and education, activism, religion, funding, communications, and the media. Commenting on this expanded direction, Gawerc describes:

> "The relatively new interest in comprehensive multi-dimensional, multi-level, and multi-track approaches to peace is due to the limited success of traditional diplomacy and military intervention to control protracted conflicts let alone achieve peace" (Gawerc, 2006 p.440).

Of particular importance in unpacking the conceptual and practical outworking of a broader understanding of peacebuilding was Lederach's analytical model '*Actors and Approaches to Peacebuilding*' described as an "analytical framework for describing the levels of an affected population" (Lederach, 1997 p.37). The model shown below sought to delineate common patterns of peace activity emerging at different levels of society and who might be involved (Beyond Intractability, 2003).

Figure 1. *Actors and approaches to peacebuilding* in Lederach (1997) cited from Beyond Intractability (2003).



Derived from John Paul Lederach, *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1997), 39.

Illustrated in Figure 1, the model focuses on strategic leadership at the top-level, middle-range level and at the grassroots-level, and seeks to portray constraints and opportunities for peacebuilding leadership both descriptively and prescriptively. Descriptively it seeks to illustrate that top-level leadership is often the least affected by conflict but is the most politically powerful and the most often viewed as responsible for the task of addressing or resolving conflict. Being most visible, however, top-level leaders are often least able to take risks for peace for fear of losing face or the support of their own constituencies in negotiations. By contrast, those at the grassroots level at the bottom of the triangle may be most directly affected by conflict, but have least access to top level leadership and consequently lack power to influence the resolution of the conflict. The middle-range level of leadership is described as those who have connections to both grassroots communities and are known to top-level leadership, for example, members of civil society such as religious leaders, non-governmental organisations, academics, women's groups or other respected local leaders. Leaders in the middle-range level of society are also less directly affected violence and conflict than those at the grassroots. They are also less visible in the public eye, and, due to the nature of their positioning between the two, have potential to become conduits and communicate 'on the ground realities' to top-level actors. Leadership at the middle-range level is positioned to enable relationships across lines of division through professional relationships and social networks that cross identity lines of division (Lederach, 1997 pp. 41-42). The model depicts a range of approaches that each level may undertake to advance peacebuilding. However, Lederach contends that middle-range level leaders hold a unique potential within conflict settings due to their ability to connect vertically both with grassroots constituencies and top-level leadership, while also holding horizontal relationships across the lines of divisions. Lederach refers to this as "middle-out" peacebuilding and describes it as strategically important to connect issues with systems both vertically and horizontally within different levels of peacebuilding (ibid, p.151).

2.2.2.1 Levels of peacebuilding: grassroots and civil society

Lederach's framework was one of the first to conceptually link how levels of peacebuilding could be integrated more holistically in order to strategically build a platform for long-term processes to build peace. From this perspective, each level contained actors and activities that could make a contribution towards peacebuilding, with the middle-range level offering a particularly unique position. The framework outlines that the grassroots represents the greatest masses of people, and as Lederach states: "life at this level is characterized, particularly in settings of protracted conflict and war, by a survival mentality" (ibid, p. 42). Local grassroots leaders operating at this level, he argues, understand the level of suffering and fear of those affected by the conflict, know their community micro-politics and usually reflect the sharpest ends of divided identity lines living at the coalface between warring communities (ibid, p.43).

While Lederach uses the terms middle-range and grassroots-level peacebuilding, another term used in recent years is civil society peacebuilding- a term scholars readily admit is ill defined and obscure:

> "'Civil society' resists easy definition, especially when discussing it as a global development. Every society has its own distinct forms of social organization, cultural and political traditions, as well as contemporary state and economic structures - all of which are central to the development of civil society and shape its specific features…Most broadly understood, however, civil society refers to the web of social relations that exist in the space between the state, the market (activities with the aim of extracting profit), and the private life of families and individuals" (Barnes, 2006b p. 7).

Barnes (2006a) writes that civil society can be expressed through associations that represent the values, needs and interests within society, containing potential either for contributing to war or peace. She argues that civil society, most often the victims and casualties of conflict often desire ways to address conflict: "Living alongside the armed actors they have greater need and greater potential to take part in peacebuilding" (Barnes, 2006a p.7). However, others scrutinise the tensions

associated with involving civil society in peacebuilding. The main critique to surface involves the nature of civil society itself and whether it can be so neatly categorised or indeed model pluralistic democratic structures in contexts of deep societal divides. Writing of civil society peacebuilding in Sri Lanka, Orjuela (2003) states:

> "The assumption that civil society is democratically organized, and thus in itself contributes to the building of a society in which conflicts are handled non-violently and democratically, must be scrutinized. Authoritarian structures and democratic deficits characterize many civil-society groups in Sri Lanka" (Orjuela, 2003 p.210).

Likewise, authors writing about divided societies recognise that civil society also includes what might be termed 'uncivil' which can be instrumental in mobilising for war as much as for peace, and reflect the divisions that form and inform conflict dynamics (Orjuela, 2003; Barnes, 2005; Acheson et al., 2011). Consequently, there is amongst some scholars, the suggestion that expectations for civil society peacebuilding may be at times unrealistic considering deep ethnic and identity divides (Belloni, 2009; White, 2011; Acheson, et al., 2011).

Marchetti and Tocci (2009) approach the conundrum of civil and uncivil society by shifting terms, framing civil society in conflict zones as "conflict society" (Marchetti and Tocci, 2009 p. 206). Eschewing what they see as a normative trap, their view is that their term better illustrates that civil society contains both civil and uncivil elements. They assert there are three roles civil society may play in conflict: fuelling conflict, holding conflict, and peacemaking. These are determined by context, identity, goals, and frameworks for action that are subject to specific political contexts (ibid p. 216). Paffenholz (2010) concurs that the conflict context is a crucial determinant in whether or not civil society can play a constructive role in peacebuilding. She outlines six influencing factors: 1) the behaviour of the state, its governance structures and role in the conflict; 2) the level of violence; 3) the freedom of the media to report in a balanced manner; 4) diversity within civil society and the nature of existing conflict divisions; 5) the behaviour of external actors; and 6) the roles of donors engaged in peacebuilding (Paffenholz, 2010 p.405). She concludes that the levels of violence and the behaviours of the state are

the two most significant determinants that influence the potential for action within civil society, but also that the greater polarisation or radicalisation that exists within civil society, the more difficult it is to "act in common cause for peacebuilding" (ibid, pp. 423-424).

In another chapter from the same text, Paffenholz (2010, pp.43-61), concerned over the lack of empirical evidence informing theories of civil society peacebuilding, outlines the results from 26 empirical studies. She finds three main trends: Firstly, that the practice of civil-society peacebuilding was influenced by two differing schools of thought which she characterised as, 'liberal peacebuilding' and 'sustainable peacebuilding' with the former exemplified by international global institutions such as the UN and World Bank, and the latter sustainable school influenced by Lederach. She contends that much of the practice that reflects Lederach's approach emphasises, in particular, his 'middle-out' approach which has created a "mushrooming of conflict resolution training and dialogue initiatives, executed mostly by international and national NGOs which receive the majority of funding" (ibid, pp. 59-60). Secondly, she asserts that there was a growing recognition that national actors should play the primary role in peacebuilding and a more limited one should be taken up by outside interveners, with actors within civil society having as an important a role to play in building peace as those involved with official or unofficial negotiations. However, despite its importance, her reviews found that local actors were being crowded out by both national and international NGO-based initiatives within civil society peacebuilding. She writes that in some places "donor-driven NGO civil society initiatives have limited the capacity to create domestic social capital and ownership for the peace process" (Paffenholz, 2010 pp.59-60). This last criticism echoes other scholars who suggest that the recent interest in civil society peacebuilding is fuelled in part by a state-building agenda that uses NGOs as tools in a democratising agenda (Richmond, 2005; Pouligny, 2005). These emerging sets of concerns dovetail with literature affiliated with the school of 'critical peace,' which the next section will detail more fully which describe civil society peacebuilding interventions as mechanisms to establish what is now termed a 'liberal peace.'

2.3. Liberal peace and the critical peace school

Boutros Boutros Ghali's commitment to post-conflict peacebuilding as articulated in *An Agenda for Peace* in 1992 aimed to support states after a cessation of violence and a negotiated peace agreement had been secured. It sought to use peacebuilding to promote post-conflict recovery and prevent the re-emergence of conflicts. Growing in a parallel track was an increasing recognition by those in the international arena that human insecurity, poverty, and conflict often exacerbated each other, hence, a need to become more skilful and conflict-sensitive to consider ways that overlapping issues could be tackled together. This development increased an interest in the expansion of peacebuilding to augment, complement and enhance existing aid and relief, poverty alleviation and development programmes. This expanded activity created both opportunities and tensions for practitioners and academics in the field of peace studies. Recognition of the relevance of peacebuilding to areas of global concern such as international aid and development, human security and -particularly after the events of 9-11 to prevent terrorism, has broadened its previous scope (Zelizer, 2013). In this regard, needless to say, many worthy initiatives have benefited by the increased profile given to peacebuilding efforts.

However, this same expansion has been the subject of a growing critique. One assertion is that the very term peace is contested, and is not, nor ever has been value or interest-free (Richmond, 2005). The argument portends that the move towards an expanded global peacebuilding mandate has served to create institutionalised and bureaucratic formations of peace which valorise a specific form - a 'liberal peace.' A further critique is that globalised peacebuilding lends itself to a technocratic blueprint approach to intervention in order to tackle conflict-prone, post-conflict or 'failed-states' (Richmond, 2005, 2009; Mac Ginty, 2006, Goetschel and Hagmann, 2009) and undermines local agency. Conceptually and in practice, the liberal peace is viewed as both promoting and reflective of the interests and normative values of liberal democratic states.

2.3.1 Technocratic peacebuilding and its undermining of the 'local'

Several strands of the liberal peace critique particularly impact upon peacebuilding at the grassroots and within civil society. While as mentioned, certainly the profile raised for international peacebuilding has undoubtedly given worthy grassroots and civil society initiatives much needed resources and recognition. There is however, an accusation that its globalised form has advertently or inadvertently marginalised and side-lined local actors- operating without adequate involvement, consultation, and respect for local knowledge (Anderson and Olsen, 2003; Pouligny, 2005; Doe, 2009; Paffenholz, 2010). Under-involving local actors has led to problematic results in places for example in Bosnia after the Dayton Accords (Donais, 2009), and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) (Odendaal, 2013 p.22) leaving instead, as Mac Ginty describes, a "no-war peace;" a shallow and superficial form of negative peace imposed from outside:

> "Elements of the liberal democratic peace have undergone a process of commodification into pre-packaged templates delivered as part of internationally supported peace accord implementation plans…Component parts of this preferred model of peace are standardised into peace-support programmes and projects that differ little whether the implementation location is Bosnia or Rwanda. Peace under the liberal democratic peace model, becomes formulaic and its reduced to time-limited events (two or three year projects on refugee repatriation, livelihood generation and democracy training) aside from the issue of the quality of peace such standardised approaches deliver, the commodification of peace in internationally supported peace interventions is an antithesis to the view that peace is a process" (Mac Ginty, 2006 p.18).

A second concern shared by scholars and practitioners of the 'liberal' peace is a privileging of bureaucratic and technocratic externally derived measures of success over locally determined peace criteria (Donais 2009; Goetschel and Hagmann, 2009; Mac Ginty, 2012). Under pressure from donor countries and regional funding bodies now willing to invest in peacebuilding initiatives, those implementing peacebuilding activities have to account for funds and produce maximum impact to demonstrate value for money. Practitioners in particular argue that such templates, more familiar to international relief and development efforts, do not necessarily lend

themselves well to peacebuilding, as causal attributions are hard to establish within the fluidity of conflict contexts (Anderson and Olsen, 2003; Nuefeldt, 2007). Furthermore, reducing local ownership serves to compound war-aggravated traumas and disempowerment already suffered by local populations (Donais, 2009). Donais (2009) suggests this approach in part stems from the tendency to pathologise conflict states, thus justifying a need to control the intervention and, "where permitted at all – local ownership unfolds under the careful supervision of responsible outsiders, who set the broad parameters of what is and is not permissible" (Donais, 2009 p.8). Building on the last point, it is argued that at best outsider-driven peace agendas may have no real impact on local conflict dynamics, but at worse can exacerbate violence, failing to understand or obscure local conflict drivers. Conversely, a better understanding of local micro-dynamics and the regional, territorial or community histories that fuel violence might aid local peacebuilding (Odendaal, 2013). 'Locals,' however side-lined, may themselves assert agency to resist such imposition creating hybridised forms of peacebuilding. However, Autesserre's (2014) scholarship suggests local agency is routinely structurally subordinated due to types of knowledge valued in international peacebuilding practice, a view discussed in more detail below.

2.3.2 Everyday peace and the politics of peacebuilding knowledge

Autesserre's (2014) examination of the 'everyday' practices of international peacebuilding interveners takes the critical peace literature even deeper into the politics of intervention and knowledge production. The thrust of the argument claims that the technocratic and bureaucratic nature of international peacebuilding (exemplified by INGOS such as the United Nations and The World Bank) has created everyday practices that ultimately make such interventions less effective. Recognising that this is in part due to the tensions produced by imposition of the western 'liberal peace,' and informed by her own research in DRC, Kosovo and South Sudan, she counters that everyday practices of international peacebuilders are also part and parcel of the problem. These practices, such as regularly rotating ex-patriate (expat) employees from short-term assignments in one conflict zone to

another, creates a subculture of transglobal expats who in most cases do not know the local cultures, languages or customs of their host countries. Autesserre pinpoints that one of the main reasons that such practices occur is due to the fact that thematic or technical knowledge is valued over local knowledge or in-country expertise (Autesserre, 2014 pp. 68-96). This elevation of technical and thematic knowledge is evident she argues, for example, in the hiring practices of international institutions and INGOs as they prioritise technical skills or academic credentials over country-specific knowledge such as local languages, or area expertise gained by years of experience working in-country. While Autessere is of the perspective that both thematic and local knowledge are important, in the practices of knowledge production within international peacebuilding, she argues that the former subordinates the latter. The result leads to ill-equipped interveners who lack the necessary information to understand the nuances of the conflict context, and reinforce power imbalances and a view of expat as expert and local stakeholder as "less sophisticated and more parochial" (Autessere, 2014 p. 84).

The 'everyday' has also been discussed within academic literature as a lens of analysis to describe, locate and explain different forms of agency among local populations living in divided societies. Scholarship generated about 'everyday' agency used to navigate conflict are also primarily associated with the critique of the liberal peace to offset what has been described by Mac Ginty (2016) as binary and dichotomised views of ordinary people in conflict zones (Mac Ginty, 2016 pp.13-14). In part this was to contribute to a debate that he construed was divorced from his own experience of growing up in Northern Ireland:

> "My father came into my mind as I saw the debate on academic agency and the liberal peace take shape. It was yet another case of academic debates in seminar rooms, conference panels and journals not reflecting what I had seen from my own experience. The debate on agency in peacebuilding contexts seemed to suggest that there were two options: that people could comply with internationally sponsored peacebuilding or that they could resist it. A normative subtext accompanied this debate and seemed to suggest that compliance was for the weak, cowed or powerless, or those in cahoots with power. Resistance, on the other hand, was seen as normatively positive and in keeping with the thinking of ideological preferences of those critiquing the liberal peace" (ibid, p.13).

The outcome of some of this scholarship has led to a rethinking of types of agency within conflict, serving to blur lines and reflect more of the grey areas of nuance that those living in deeply contested societies may experience. Instead of fitting into ideal normative categories the 'everyday' contains a greater awareness of the multitude of ways human ingenuity, particularly those living within conflict contexts utilise when managing on a day-to-day basis, and what may inform choices about how best to live in such a context.

While coping mechanisms may be construed as living within a negative peace, it is argued that the 'everyday' despite limitations is also a potential location for transformation (Mac Ginty, 2014). Thus, in an attempt to move away from technocratic peacebuilding this literature has led to a reconsideration of standard and normative peacebuilding Design, Monitoring and Evaluation (DME) practices in order to retune them to monitor a wider array of "everyday indicators of peace" as defined by local populations (Mac Ginty, 2013; Mac Ginty and Firchow, 2016).

2.4 Tensions and debates about knowledge for peacebuilding

There are two main tensions evident in the literature that intersects with this thesis, particularly as they speak to issues of knowledge production for peace. These tensions could be essentialised as: *Who is a peacebuilder? What types of knowledge do they have or need to have, to build peace?* The fact that these two questions have emerged as pressing debates within the field is revealing of the development of both peacebuilding practice and the academic field. The first question, *who is a peacebuilder*, asks who is best placed to intervene as a peacebuilder and in doing so debates the role of insiders (locals) and outsiders (external interveners) and to what effect? Lederach (as noted earlier) from the early and mid-1990s advocated the value of local knowledge citing its importance for conflict transformation interventions and training, and that it remains a much-discussed topic is noteworthy. Paffenholz (2015) describes Lederach's scholarship as the first of two 'local turns' in peacebuilding literature. Describing the 'first turn' as originating with

Lederach and other early conflict resolution theorists, Paffenholz characterises it as a school of thought associated with 'sustainable' peacebuilding. By contrast, she views the second turn as associated with the school of 'critical' peace and influenced by a "post-colonial and post-structuralist theoretical framework" (Paffenholz, 2015 p.1). While both 'local turns' may be lodged in different theoretical orientations, there remains a shared set of concerns that speak to the tensions concerning knowledge production for peacebuilding.

Firstly, interventions may intentionally or unintentionally reinforce global power inequities with the dominance of outsider approaches (often the global north over the global south) which disempowers and marginalises local people. Secondly, that outsider-based interventions ultimately impact the success and utility of sustainable peacebuilding. While the critical peace school may focus on the detriment of outside intervention as a form of neo-colonial imposed peace, the sustainable school emphasises the lack of legitimacy or sustainability of such approaches. However, a further charge reflects concerns over both power and sustainability by claiming that outsider interventions utilise externalised concepts and ideas which are masked as 'universal' but are in fact embedded with 'liberal' western norms. Therefore, outsider interventions may be both a tool of domination and embedded with outsider norms that lack utility and relevance.

Providing that the 'local' is considered a source of knowledge, literature asks within a given conflict context, whether peacebuilding at the grassroots and within civil society is a valid and valuable location of knowledge for peace, or if day-to-day survival is too urgent. Lederach (1997) describes the grassroots-level as "the masses, the base of society" that are often focused on everyday survival and in worse cases trying to meet basic needs for shelter, food and safety (Lederach, 1997 p.42). However, he includes grassroots leaders as important in his peacebuilding framework. Lederach does not use the term 'civil society' but lists NGOs within his middle-range leadership level (ibid). Brewer (2010) distinguishes between grassroots and civil society, stating that grassroots are not usually the peacebuilders:

> "But what work there is done in peace processes tends not to come from the grassroots. The grassroots are amorphous, unorganized if not disorganized and poor. With weak social capital and suffering from social exclusion the grassroots lacks the skills, resources and motivations found in civil society" (Ibid, 54).

By contrast, Mac Ginty (2013; 2014) as mentioned previously, has highlighted the ingenuity of the grassroots 'everyday peacebuilding' and advocates for bottom-up indicators of peace impact at the community level (ibid). Barnes occupies a middle-ground by stating: "While it is rare for grassroots efforts to transform wider systems of conflict and war; it is also not possible for these wider systems to be transformed without stimulating changes at the community level" (Barnes, 2006b p. 9). As these views suggest, there is on-going debate about how much agency is afforded to grassroots peacebuilding and within civil society.

One of the most significant differences between the sustainable peace school and the critical peace school is the role of the intervener. While the sustainable school sees a role for the outsider, providing they take an elicitive approach (Lederach, 1997) the critical peace school takes a much more negative view of the outsider as an intervener. It could be argued that the one cause of the disenchantment with intervention has been exacerbated by the manner by which peacebuilding has expanded and professionalised.

For example, a shift in discourse away from more idealistic and utopian conceptualisations of peace towards a view of 'strategic peace' may have helped to move views of intervention in conflict away from zero sum debates between hawk and dove. However, it may be that peacebuilding also became a victim of its own success (Stanton and Kelly, 2015). Put another way, the same promising developments that helped to build a professionalised body of knowledge and research in peace studies have also played a role in creating some of the complaints at the source of the liberal peace critique. For example, the strategic frameworks proposed in Lederach's second book, *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies* (1997), while advancing analytical tools for peacebuilding may also

have become a potential blueprint for INGOs or the UN. As Paffenholz (2010) found in her review of civil society peacebuilding, many INGOs had adopted Lederach's 'middle-out' approach. With the best of intentions, promising academic theoretical peacebuilding developments can become bureaucratic instruments that run counter to their very intention. While not negating any of its significance, it is interesting to consider what might have been the outcome for the field if Lederach's first book *Preparing for Peace* (1995) had been his definitive signature text with its strong emancipatory approach, rather than the text that followed it *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies* (1997) with its subtle shift towards strategic and possibly more technically oriented approaches to building peace.

The professionalisation of peace has no doubt played a role in co-producing an orientation towards the more technocratic peace (Mac Ginty, 2012; Chandler, 2017) and, in turn, *what type of knowledge is most valuable for peacebuilding*. The debate charges that due in part to the professionalisation and bureaucratic development of peace interventions, thematic, skilled or technical knowledge is privileged over local knowledge, as the former is claimed to be more transferable across differing contexts (Autesserre, 2014). Autesserre's argument is that 'everyday' international peacebuilding practice employs knowledge hierarchies that privilege the outsider knowledge as the neutral and un-biased expert, while viewing local knowledge holders as at best parochial, and at worst biased and self-serving. Autesserre quoting Barnett describes how knowledge hierarchies reinforce professionalisation, so that: "In modern society credentialed knowledge… trumps local and practical knowledge" (ibid, p.75). Thus, Mac Ginty's development of 'everyday peace' indicators (Mac Ginty, 2013) reflects this growing interest in enabling local people to build capacity, or to use Autesserre's term, "author" their own peacebuilding (Autesserre, 2014).

2.4.1 Knowledge debates in Northern Ireland

In the case of Northern Ireland, tensions over knowledge production for peacebuilding focus less on whether local or external actors are best placed to intervene. Given that most intervention has been locally led and driven, the role of outsiders is a much less highly charged issue; however, there are related sets of concerns surrounding the role and impact of peacebuilding conducted by grassroots actors within civil society. In this regard, an unnamed corollary exists- if its impact is indeterminable- then consequently there is little valuable knowledge held about peacebuilding by those involved. Furthermore, the literature focused on grassroots and civil society peacebuilding impact in Northern Ireland primarily judges impact against their role in securing or supporting the political peace (McCartney, 1999; Cochrane, 2001a, 2001b, 2006; Cochrane and Dunn, 2002; Guelke, 2003; Belloni, 2010; White, 2011). When considered against this yardstick, the scholarship primarily draws a lukewarm picture. Exceptions to this are in the minority, but are noteworthy. Fitzduff and Williams (2007) take a case-study approach to research factors that may have helped Northern Ireland move towards peace and find that civil-society based activities account for over half of the initiatives deemed most important to that effort. Similarly, Kilmurray (2016) seeks to take the spotlight off the achievements of the political actors with an exhaustive chronicle of the efforts of community-level activism throughout the Troubles.

Northern Ireland is more often offered as an illustration of a 'conflict society' based on the argument that conflict societies can be rallied for conflict or peace (Marchetti and Tocci, 2009). Belloni (2009) cites as an example the popularity of both the Orange Order and the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) two organisations that have held exclusionary policies and practices and that also manifest the divisions in the community (Belloni, 2009). White (2011) critiques Northern Ireland for similar reasons, arguing that if civil society peacebuilding is positively correlated to social capital, Northern Ireland may suffer from excessive bonding capital but not enough bridging capital. He extends the critique stating that the prospect for developing a robust cross-communal civil society is thwarted by consociationalism

and as a result, civil society is likely to become more, rather than less, entrenched within their respective communities. Similarly, Acheson et al. conclude "expectations about the effective role of civil society organisations should be scaled back" (Acheson et al, 2011 pp.18-19).

More optimistic views from scholars on its role on securing the political peace was that efforts made at a grassroots level and within civil society created a favourable backdrop for Track 1 political actors during negotiations (Cochrane, 2001a; 2001b; 2006; Cochrane and Dunn, 2002; Fitzduff, 2002; McCartney, 1999; Knox, 2011; Knox and Quirk, 2000). Guelke (2003) in particular acknowledges the role of 'Initiative 92' and the YES campaign as influential to political negotiations and in helping the referendum to pass, but also articulates that a case can be made that efforts of civil society has had little influence on changing societal attitudes and that, "even as a background factor, civil society tends to be credited with little influence upon events or attitudes" (Guelke, 2003 p.68).

Cochrane (2001a, 2001b; 2006) and Cochrane and Dunn (2002) cover the most territory on the role of grassroots and civil society based peacebuilding efforts led by, what they term Peace and Conflict Resolution Organisations (P/CROs). These authors argue that such groups and their associated activity was indirectly important and primarily acknowledge the support role that local voluntary groups played in holding society together during the worst of the violence (Cochrane, 2001a, 2001b, 2006; Cochrane and Dunn, 2002). They state there is a view that without such groups Northern Ireland would have been much worse:

> "As well as playing a stretcher-bearer and acting as a comfort for the worst aspects of the conflict, these groups, for all their inadequacies, provided evidence for the desire for peace in Northern Ireland" (Cochrane and Dunn, 2002 p.179).

As mentioned previously, in light of the question of what knowledge has been gained about peacebuilding, a critique is implied in the discussion of its role and impact- but the critique is also made explicitly. Grassroots and civil society peacebuilding groups are viewed, as expanded below, as suffering from a lack of

strategy and coherency. Cochrane (2001b) suggests a perception that the sector has been accused of being "muddle-headed peaceniks" (Cochrane, 2001b p 99). One explanation offered by these authors for this perception is that peacebuilding approaches are informed by two different theoretical perspectives - with one view believing that relational and behavioural approaches are needed to tackle issues of prejudice and sectarianism, while the other prioritises structural dimensions, such as inequality, social deprivation or justice issues. Incoherence is, in part, a product of these different theoretical orientations. However, blame is also attributed to the organisations and individuals themselves suggesting they lack coordination, sharing of practice and had conflicting strategies:

> "It would be fair to say that the P/CRO sector itself shares some responsibility for its own shortcomings and cannot simply blame funders, policy makers or the media for difficulties it faces. There is a need for these organisations to think in a much more coordinated, holistic and strategic way about they are trying to achieve" (Cochrane and Dunn, 2002 p.171).

Implicitly stated is the view that if civil society peacebuilding had been built upon and demonstrated an agreed-upon consolidated theoretical coherence, it would be more strategic and therefore, demonstrate more impact. Given these views of grassroots level and civil society peacebuilding in Northern Ireland as lacking in strategy, coherence and impact - it unsurprising to find that grassroots and civil society practitioners are perceived as "muddle-headed" or as neglected within knowledge production for peacebuilding.

This point speaks to another dimension of knowledge that bears some resemblance to the broader debates in the field: *what type of knowledge is valuable for peacebuilding?* Concerns exist in Northern Ireland that are echoed in the broader critique of liberal peace, that peacebuilding particularly since 1995 as greater funding arrived, has become overly bureaucratic. Buchanan (2011) writes that overly technical funding applications became burdensome for small organisations that struggled with administrative requirements. She describes how European funding included technocratic requirements that increasingly shifted peacebuilding

away from meeting needs towards project delivery, and demanded a different set of skills and professionalised training:

> "Peace II was characterised by excessive bureaucracy, to the extent that it distracted attention away from the programme's overarching aims and fixed attention instead on operational delivery. The application process became a source of disempowerment for many as the lack of capacity in the voluntary and community sector and the need for adequate and properly trained support was simply disregarded" (Buchanan, 2011 p.176).

The local professionalisation of peace was a concern identified from as early as 1995. Lampen (1995) writes that early 'peace pioneers' sometimes felt "pushed aside by what they see as the increasing professionalism and intellectualism" of the field (Lampen, 1995 p.144). Local peacebuilders worried that professionalisation would bring externally-based criteria for measuring outcomes that local peacebuilders might feel may or may not accurately reflect realities on the ground, or that a need for hard empirical results would direct the work in ways that would impede, rather than progress, peacebuilding:

> "[T]he demand for evaluation may lead to inappropriate activities, just because they are easier to evaluate… There may be a danger of people saying, "Oh well, if that's what they want…Yet facilitating a dialogue between two hardline community leaders in a flashpoint area may be far more valuable than attracting a hundred people to a cross-community football match" (Lampen, 1995 p.147).

Stanton and Kelly (2015) suggest that the tensions produced by an increasingly technocratic thrust of professionalised peacebuilding are one part of the explanation for the perceived theoretical incoherence of local peacebuilders:

> "in the Northern Ireland context, evidence seems to be emerging that the techno-rational thrust of professionalization and the bureaucratization of peace, exacerbated by the institutionalized dominance of research over practice within academia, has led to the absence of practical knowledge and experience used as a valid source of knowledge creation" (Stanton and Kelly, 2015 p.44).

However, a second explanation these same authors argue is that epistemic knowledge (theories) and technical knowledge (skills) are privileged over practical knowledge, in academia, for example. One result these authors suggest is that

research has been privileged over practice in academia, and therefore, Northern Ireland practitioners have not been viewed as knowledge producers (ibid).

Conclusion

In summary, it is evident from the literature reviewed that debates over whose knowledge counts and what types of knowledge matter for peacebuilding are echoed at the academic, practice level and also are live debates on the ground both internationally and locally in Northern Ireland. Literature reviewed demonstrated the developments in the academic discipline, and the shifting schools of thought in both theory and practice. In doing so it contrasted tensions surrounding the two 'local' turns as outlined by Paffenholz (2015). The first turn advocated by Lederach (1995) whose practice rested on the approach that outsiders could be useful particularly if using an elicitive rather than prescriptive approach which valued local knowledge. The second turn, associated with the school of 'critical peace' takes a much more sceptical stance towards any outside intervention, viewing intervention as containing embedded normative values that risk a hegemonic 'liberal' peace. Still others debate whether domestic civil society actors or 'locals' can be expected to effectively build peace given conflict society's predispositions towards excessive bonding rather than bridging social capital.

The literature on grassroots and civil society peacebuilding in Northern Ireland was investigated and reflected similar tensions. The literature suggested reasons and an explanation as to why, despite the longevity of practical activities, actors working at the grassroots and within civil society peacebuilding in Northern Ireland have not been involved in theory building and have remained under-utilised in knowledge creation. Theoretical incoherence or "muddle-headedness, " professionalised technocratic practices, and knowledge hierarchies between academia and practice were all suggested to explain why practitioners have been underutilised as peacebuilding knowledge producers. However, to advance the argument that this is an oversight, and that this body of knowledge may generate important understanding of applied peacebuilding practice if developed, it is first necessary to

conceptualise the nature of practical knowledge as it may be applicable for peacebuilding; this is the task given to the next chapter.

Chapter 3: Phronesis as an epistemology

Introduction

The research question asks what actors working at the grassroots and within civil society have learned from 50 years of peacebuilding practice. This question rests on an argument that those with practical lived experience used to build peace and social change in Northern Ireland have valid and valuable, but currently underutilised, knowledge. Adopting Aristotle's term, 'phronesis,' or practical wisdom, this thesis holds that practical knowledge is both *valid* and *valuable*, and that those holding 'phronetic' knowledge are uniquely equipped to contribute to knowledge production for peacebuilding. The purpose of this chapter is to begin to make this argument by illustrating the concept of phronesis and demonstrating its validity and value.

The chapter seeks to identify the concept of phronesis within extant literature and from this basis moves to build a conceptual framework to assess its relevance, particularly in light of current debates surrounding knowledge for peacebuilding as outlined in Chapter 2. Establishing the validity and value of phronesis is important in order to strengthen the argument that such knowledge be included and prioritised for knowledge production. Logic follows that if such knowledge is valued, practitioners may more readily be tasked with reflecting on their experience. While that proposition may sound intuitive, it does not always follow that those who engage in practical efforts and intervention in social change are tasked with reflecting on their work theoretically, or by such efforts make a contribution to the academic community. Practitioners are not only often overlooked by academia but also devalued, not only "excluded from the knowledge creation process… but assumed to suffer from knowledge deficiency" (Eraut, 1994 p.54). As a result theory and practice can operate in silos with little interaction.

The chapter begins with an overview of literature most explicitly concerning and intersecting with the concept of phronesis. While phronesis is linked to several different but not completely unrelated sets of scholarship, such as classical studies, ethics and philosophy, those viewed as most relevant to peacebuilding were explored. This included Aristotle's *Nichomachean Ethics* followed by literature covering professional education and practice (Schön and Argyris, 1974; Schön, 1983, 1987; Eraut 1994, 2009; Kinsella and Pitman, 2012). Insights gained from authors of professional practice literature such as Michael Eraut and Donald Schön proved particularly salient. This literature uncovered ways that experience generates knowledge and considered how and why practical knowledge became elided and divisions created between academia and practitioners. Consequences of this division are relevant in light of a growing professionalised, bureaucratic and technocratic field of peacebuilding (Mac Ginty, 2012; Stanton and Kelly, 2015).

However, many practitioners taking part in this research were not 'professional' peacebuilders, but using their own practical knowledge to guide their activities. Therefore, it was also useful to explore complementary scholarship in order to begin to build a conceptual frame for phronesis relevant for peacebuilding. Consequently, the chapter moves from Aristotelian and professional practice literature to a more diverse literature review across disciplines. Useful insights were gained from scholarship on feminist epistemologies, sociology, and psychology to further understand phronesis as a distinct type of knowledge and how it may demonstrate value. The chapter moves toward closure by using these broad insights to construct a conceptual frame for phronesis for peacebuilding. Once constructed, the chapter concludes by seeking to determine whether or where the concept intersects or contributes to current debates to determine if phronesis, conceptualised for peacebuilding, demonstrates added value.

3.1 The Aristotelian view: practical knowledge, a neglected virtue*?*

The nature of knowledge has been a key topic for philosophers since antiquity and remains a source of debate and discussion to the present day. The topic is of

concern to scholars from as diverse disciplines as sociology, critical theorists, feminist scholars, as well as postmodernists. Each are interested in interrogating the nature of knowledge- what can be known, whose knowledge is considered valued and valuable, and for what purpose. While many schools of thought continue to interrogate the nature of knowledge, it could be argued that by its formative nature, early antiquity has played a significant role in shaping some of the basic landscape out of which those debates have emerged and left a sizable conceptual and linguistic imprint. Of particular interest here is how early conceptualisations of knowledge, as described in Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics,* both illuminated forgotten and excluded forms of knowledge and at the same time may have planted seeds of tensions between them.

Aristotle, in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, sets out a discussion on three forms of knowledge, which he describes as virtues, dividing them initially between what is invariable (what he calls scientific) and variable (what he calls calculative). Discussing first the invariable, scientific knowledge or episteme, Aristotle asserts that this form of knowledge is of universals, and is able to be proven through processes of deduction or induction producing demonstrated truth:

> "[n]ow what scientific knowledge is, if we are to speak exactly and not follow mere similarities, is plain from what follows. We all suppose that what we know if not even capable of being otherwise; of things capable of being otherwise, we do not know, when they have passed outside our observation, whether they exist or not. Therefore the object of knowledge is of necessity. Therefore it is eternal; for things that are of necessity in the unqualified sense are eternal; and things that are eternal are ungenerated and imperishable" (Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics, 1139b 18-25).

It is from episteme that the word epistemology is derived. He contrasts this *invariable* universal scientific knowledge with the next two types of knowledge described as *variable*, "things made and things done" (Aristotle, Nichomachean Ethics 1140a). The first of these variable forms of knowledge, techne, is described as knowledge of how things are made such as the production of art, or craft. Techne is the root of the modern words technology and technique, and is understood as art, craft or skill-based knowledge:

> "All art is concerned with coming into being, i.e. with contriving and considering how something may come into being which is capable of either being or not being, and whose origin is in the maker and not in the thing made" (Aristotle, Nic. Ethics, 1140a 11-14)

Finally, Aristotle discusses a third virtue of knowledge that is also variable, what he calls phronesis, commonly understood as practical knowledge, or practical wisdom. It is also a form of variable knowledge, because it is context-dependent. Phronesis is knowledge needed for action and involves making judgements about what might be the right action to take in a particular context or situation. However what is considered the 'right' action to take, according to Aristotle, is action with an end towards what is good for one's self. Furthermore, not only are those using phronesis able to deliberate on what is good for their own well being, but "what sorts of things conduce to the good life in general" (Aristotle, Nic.Ethics, 1140a 26-27). In particular, according to Aristotle, this type of knowledge is needed for acting for the well-being of both individuals and for groups of people. He expands by suggesting that Pericles (an esteemed leader credited for leading Athens at the height of its power and influence) is an example of a man with phronesis:

> "It is for this reason that we think Pericles and men like him have practical wisdom, namely, because they can see what is good for themselves and what is good for men in general; we consider that those can do this who are good at managing households or states"(Aristotle, Nic. Ethics, 1040b-7-10).

Those who are said to have practical wisdom are able to show good judgement and to deliberate well for the end result of well being, human flourishing and the good life, or (in Greek) *eudemonia*. Phronesis is described by Aristotle as knowledge needed for good deliberation or what might be termed as judgment-in-context-for-action aimed towards a 'flourishing' life.

Reflecting more on the differences between these forms of knowledge, Aristotle argues that philosophical wisdom is scientific, but not the same thing as practical wisdom and that one can be admired because they know things that are "remarkable, admirable, difficult, and divine, but useless" (ibid, 1141b 7). By contrast, practical wisdom is action oriented and gained by an accumulated knowledge of particulars and experience. Giving an example to illustrate, Aristotle

states that one might know a rule or theory- for example, that all light meats are wholesome (episteme), but lack the practical knowledge of eating chicken to understand or know that chicken had light meat. He contrasts this with one who had practical and particular knowledge that chicken was healthy without knowing the theory or rule to explain scientifically why.

His belief was that all forms of knowledge were necessary but practical wisdom may be more important because phronesis may also include knowing when to use aspects of the other two forms of knowledge to achieve the good life. Aristotle placed emphasis on the fact that practical wisdom is gained through knowledge of an accumulation of particulars, and through experience over time. As a result, he correlates age and phronesis and, in doing so, views young people as lacking experience and, consequently, phronesis. Interestingly, phronesis has dropped out of the modern lexicon, and there is no modern derivation for phronesis (Flyvbjerg, 2001).

In summary, Aristotle articulates that scientific knowledge (episteme), art or craft knowledge (techne), and practical wisdom (phronesis) are all different forms of knowledge. He believed that each were necessary for the effective functioning of society, but considered that phronesis may be the most important. This was because when phronesis was present, both techne and episteme were also being utilised (Flyvbjerg, 2001 p.60). However, while Aristotle articulated the value of all the virtues, and emphasised that those using phronesis encompassed the others, he may have nonetheless laid foundations in the divide between these forms of knowledge. Aristotle asserted that phronesis could not become scientific knowledge (which he states is always concerned with universals) because phronesis is concerned with variables that necessitate deliberation. Phronesis therefore, is always context-dependent- used to make a judgment about action. This set of distinctions suggests that phronesis due to its variable nature cannot be considered scientific or universally generalisable, and therefore can’t be theorised. It may also help explain how and why phronesis has come to be elided as part of knowledge production.

3.2 Phronesis: insights from the professional practice literature

The emergence of the Enlightenment is often viewed as a watershed in championing scientific progress, technology, and empiricism. It may also shine light on how knowledge considered phronetic begins to disappear from view. Indirectly building on Aristotle's concepts of episteme, techne and phronesis, Donald Schön (1983) attributes divisions in knowledge production to the emergence of positivism in the early 19th century and to a subsequent division of labour associated with it. Under the influence of positivism, social sciences attempted to replicate and model themselves after the same type of knowledge as was produced by the natural sciences. According to Schön, positivist influence on the academy resulted in the dominance of an understanding of knowledge as scientific only when it could be measured empirically, when it valued rationality over intuition, and objectivity over subjectivity (Schön, 1983 pp.31-37). Schön argued that as positivism took hold within academic institutions such as universities in the early 20th century, this epistemology became embedded into its knowledge production practices (ibid).

As a result, a division of labour emerged such that scientific research was located only in the 'higher' education institutions of the universities, rather than the 'lower' professional schools. Therefore, building theory was the designated job of scientists and scholars. By contrast, it was the role of the professions to test theory and bring it back to the scientists to refine. In this division, scientific theoretical knowledge was privileged over practical knowledge. As Schön states:

> "Research is institutionally separate from practice, connected by carefully define relationships. Practitioners bring researchers the problems for study—the researchers role is distinct from, and usually considered superior to, the role of the practitioner" (ibid, p.26).

When universities expanded to include professional training within their disciplines, the dominant model was retained and professional knowledge remained subordinate as Schön describes:

> "They [professionalizing occupations] paid a price. They had to accept the Positivist epistemology of practice which was now built into the very tissue of the universities. And they had to accept the fundamental division of labor…It was to be the business of university-based scientists and scholars to create the fundamental theory which professionals and technicians would apply to practice. …But this division of labor reflected a hierarchy of kinds of knowledge which was also a ladder of status…thus were planted the seeds of the Positivist curriculum…. and the roots of the now-familiar split between research and practice" (ibid p.37).

3.2.1 The dominance of a technical-rational epistemology of practice

Schön asserts that as positivism influenced the development of professional practice, it resulted in the dominance of what he terms, 'Technical-Rationality' within many professions (Schön, 1983). In the Technical-Rationality epistemology of practice, "professional activity consists in instrumental problem solving made rigorous by the application of scientific theory and critique" (ibid p.21). As a result, 'Technical Rationality' became the model of professional knowledge "which has most powerfully shaped both our thinking about the professions and the institutional relations of research, education, and practice" (Schön, 1983 p.21).

Schön's classic text, *The Reflective Practitioner* (1983) identified a growing distrust of, and waning confidence both within professions and of professionals. He attributes this distrust in part to the divorce between practice and theory, which he stated had left practitioners ill equipped to handle an increasingly complex, multi-varied, unstable and unpredictable world of practice. These complexities defy the logic of the Technical-Rational problem-solving paradigm. Schön quoting Ackoff describes them as, "dynamic situations that consist of complex systems of changing problems that interact with each other. I call these situations messes" (ibid, p.16).

Schön ultimately argues that professions have become overly dependent on techniques (techne), but that their technical skills are letting them down as they cannot predict and account for the increasingly complexity of practice. He suggests, however, that some practitioners have been able to navigate this dynamic environment by using *different* sources of knowledge, having acquired this ability to

excel amidst complexity by reflecting on their own 'theories-in-use' and interrogating assumptions they bring to their practice. Drawing upon different sources of knowledge, these practitioners are willing to tackle problems that exist in the "swampy lowland where situations are confusing messes incapable of technical solution" (ibid, pp. 42-43) and in such places practitioners learn from "experience, trial and error, intuition and muddling through" (ibid).

However, a dilemma exists for practitioners who have operated effectively in the face of a complex and unstable environment when trying to describe *how* they knew *what to do,* because what counts as knowledge when judging a context does not count within an empirical Technical-Rational model of practice. Thus the very skills and abilities that are needed to practice well in complex, variable contexts, and which should be highlighted as important, are made invisible by the dominance of the Technical-Rational empirical model. While not naming it directly Schön's description of the type of knowledge practitioners' use, and their ability to make a judgment-in-context-for-action, suggests phronesis:

> "Professionals have been disturbed to find that they cannot account for processes they have come to see as central to professional competence. It is difficult for them to imagine how to describe and teach what might be meant by making sense of uncertainty, performing artistically, setting problems, and choosing among competing professional paradigms, when these processes seem mysterious in the light of prevailing model of professional knowledge…. we are bound to an epistemology of practice which leaves us at a loss to explain, or even to describe, the competence to which we now give overriding importance" (ibid, pp.19-20).

3.2.2 Navigating the swampy low-land

While not naming phronesis per se, Schön's insights on implicit and tacit forms of knowledge to make "sense of uncertainty" (ibid, p. 20), which he calls 'theories-in-use' and 'knowledge-in-action' gained through experience working in a "swampy lowland" (ibid, p. 42) helps to shed further light on the type of practical implicit but usable knowledge which practitioners may hold. Given the instability and fluidity which permeate conflict settings, knowledge of how to navigate this type of context is exactly what Schön is referring to when he describes knowledge gained while

working in complex and dynamic changing 'messes'. However, as he describes, articulating the criteria for judging a context is often difficult. Practitioners may know what to do without necessarily knowing why. He describes the phenomena as "knowing-in-action"(Schön, 1983 p.59) and likens it to a baseball player who knows how to judge his pitch in the moment to maximise a batter's weakness, changing his pace accordingly. In later works, he likens it an accomplished jazz musician who improvises with his fellow musicians who "feel where the music is going and adjust their playing accordingly" (Schön, 1987 p.30). Judgment, which aids this form of practice, according to Schön, is formed by knowledge held tacitly and implicitly of which they may be unable to easily articulate, or be explicitly aware. In his scholarship on the topic, Polanyi's (1966) development of the concept of tacit knowledge is used to explain how practitioners may use judgment and knowledge implicitly (Schön and Argyris, 1974 pp. 10-11). Tacit knowledge underpins 'knowing-in-action' and 'theories-in-use' (Argyris and Schön, 1974 pp.10-11; Schön 1983 pp. 49-51, Schön, 1987 pp. 22-25). As he puts it:

> "In his day-to-day practice he [the professional] makes innumerable judgments of quality for which he cannot state adequate criteria, and he displays skills for which he cannot state the rules and procedures. Even when he makes conscious use of research-based theories and techniques, he is dependent on tacit recognitions, judgement and skilful performances" (Schön, 1983 p.50).

For this reason, knowing-in-action and judgments made about practice are made *even when a practitioner is unable to articulate why*. Striving to make what is tacitly known more explicit is, for Schön, a key to reflective practice.

Drawing together Schön's ideas and that of another scholar of professional practice, Elizabeth Kinsella (2012), further scope is provided for considering phronesis as a form of knowledge which uses what is being termed here, judgment-in-context-for-action. Kinsella concurs with Schön's descriptions adding that practitioners may also employ what she calls "embodied reflection" when making judgements (Kinsella, 2012 pp.39-41). Kinsella views embodied reflection as a form of tacit knowledge that extends beyond the cognitive, and which actively rejects "body and mind dualisms" (ibid, p.41).

Michael Eraut, an educational scholar writing about professional learning, sheds further light on tacit knowledge in practice. Writing about the nature of work-based learning, Eraut reflects that the process of developing tacit knowledge is an important part of professional competency. He compares it to those entering into a new job, stating that much of workplace learning is informal and "occurs as a by-product of engaging in work processes and activities" (Eraut, 2009 p.1). Learning for practice, he writes, entails not only the importance of personal capabilities, but also how to read the context in order to be able to "do the right thing at the right time" (ibid). In order to do this he suggests, there is a need for the practitioner:

1) to understand both the general context and the specific situation you are expected to deal with,
2) to decide what needs to be done by yourself and possibly also by others, and
3) implement what you have decided, individually or as a group, through performing a series of actions (ibid).

Examining the first of these points primarily, Eraut expands on the ability to read the context more fluently in his discussion of how new professionals use informal learning to acquire tacit knowledge. To do so he highlights the work of Dreyfus and Dreyfus (1986) who systematised the progression route of informal learning from experience in five levels (Eraut, 2009 p.3). The model is briefly summarised and paraphrased from Dreyfus (2004).

Figure 2: **The Five-Stage Model of Adult Skill Acquisition (Dreyfus and Dreyfus, 1986; Dreyfus, 2004)**

The Five-Stage Model of Adult Skill Acquisition

Level 1 Novice: Adherence to taught rules or plans, the novice uses learned rules to guide action. Novice practitioner has little experience for understanding context for action.

Level 2 Advanced Beginner: With some gained experience, Advanced Beginner is able but still limited to distinguishing similarities in a similar context.

Level 3 Competent: At competent stage, one is now able to prioritize as a mechanism to cope with crowded sets of choices. Goal planning implemented to organise action around prioritisation in given context.

Level 4 Proficient: Has now gained ability to see what is most important and able to grasp bigger picture, operating more holistically. Decisions come more easily as patterns built up from previous experiences and contexts begin to emerge. Greater intuitive decision used in conjunction with problem-solving.

Level 5 Expert: Not reliant on guidelines or taught rules but on deep tacit level intuitive understanding. Expert is able to perform without conscious deliberation in holistic and embodied ways, utilising analytic reasoning only in more novel cases.

Eraut emphasises that throughout all five levels, competency is developed in reading the context, but that at the latter stages forms of judgment and deliberation begin to happen more intuitively, "based on the tacit application of tacit rules" (Eraut, 2000 p.127). Eraut describes the model as helpful for understanding the development of tacit knowledge, and in particular how, once tacit knowledge is developed, it can be difficult to unlearn (Eraut, 2009 p.4).

Polanyi (1966), the philosopher most directly associated with the development of the term tacit knowledge also sees it as something more innate and the source of human beings "highest creative powers" (Polanyi, 1966 p.15). Linking innate competencies and sources of human innovation to tacit knowledge, he gives the example of the ability to recognise faces without being able to describe how they can be recognised. In other words, if just a nose or a mouth or eyes were shown independent of the face it would be a challenged to identify, but when features were seen together, the face could be recognised (Polanyi 1966, pp. 4-5). Viewing this as a collection of particulars which generate meaning and recognition, Polanyi,

similar to Kinsella, linked tacit knowledge to a form of sensory knowledge and perception which is “incorporated into our body” (ibid, p.16).

3.3 Phronesis as judgment of the particular

Michael Polanyi’s articulation of how humans carry innate ability to “know more than we can tell” illustrated through our tacit ability to recognise a collection of particulars, helps to build the next conceptual bridge towards phronesis for peacebuilding (Polanyi 1966 p.4). Tacking away from the professional practice literature towards those involved in looking at phronesis from a broader social science perspective, Schwartz and Sharpe (2010) describe phronesis as, in part, developed by our in-built ability to recognise collections of particulars and recognise patterns over time as a result of our accumulated sets of experiences. In their text, *Practical Wisdom: The Right Way to Do the Right Thing (2010)* calling for Aristotelian ethics to be re-examined for modern professions and institutions, Schwartz and Sharpe describe phronesis, practical wisdom, as an innate human capacity for wisdom (Schwartz and Sharpe, 2010 p.52).

Drawing from recent developments in neurobiology and psychology, Schwartz and Sharpe (2010) focus on how humans use accumulated experience to make sense and create order through pattern recognition. They describe the ability to perceive patterns as an unconscious activity that allows navigation of everyday life without conscious awareness. However, importantly, *experience* shapes and influences which patterns are retained and how sense is made from them. In other words “[W]hat counts as a pattern worth recognising depends on our experience” (Schwartz and Sharpe, 2010 p.84). Summarising their discussion on pattern recognition (ibid pp. 82-91), they identify that exercising practical wisdom stems in part from developing an expertise of lived or practical experience that allows one the ability to recognise patterns quickly and intuitively over time. Moreover, this intuited pattern recognition informs judgment when considering what to do in a particular set of circumstances. Judgment of the particular is held up against the

patterns of lived experienced to determine how similar or different this particular may be from other similar experiences. It is this sequence that helps determine what might be done or should be done in a given situation. Similar to Polanyi, Schwartz and Sharpe (2010) reflect that this sequencing can be difficult to verbalise but that pattern recognition guides judgment of the ways a case is both similar and different within a particular situation. Schwartz and Sharpe (2010) view their argument for practical wisdom from the perspective of ethics, articulating that developing phronesis is important in order to exercise judgment in the particular, when 'universal rules' do not always apply. In fact, in their view universal rules may obscure judgment about what is the right thing to do in a given particular situation:

> "The fact that many of the patterns we recognise are not easily captured in language has important implications when it comes to thinking about moral rules as guides to conduct….If we rely on rules to tell us what to do, then we shut ourselves off from the information and understanding we may have that cannot be put into words. And doing that may deprive us of the opportunity to make for more nuanced judgments than any rules would allow" (Schwartz and Sharpe, 2010 pp.85-86).

Finally, Schwartz and Sharpe (2010) argue that pattern recognition is also learned through trial and error, suggesting that cognitive networks play a role in helping humans to learn through experience over time. Furthermore, because cognitive networks are forged by experience, learning to make 'good judgments' is also a consequence of making bad judgments. By considering how a new situation or context may be similar or different from one previously encountered, the process of pattern recognition uses those experiences to build up judgment, intuitively steering away from choices made on previous occasions of 'bad judgment' (Schwartz and Sharpe, 2010 p. 88). Interestingly, these insights on pattern recognition mimic in part the Dreyfus and Dreyfus model of informal learning (Dreyfus and Dreyfus, 1986; 2004), a model which also includes the view that pattern recognition becomes intuitive over time as experience is accumulated.

3.3.2 Ways of knowing: insights from feminist epistemologies

Phronesis, viewed as knowledge gained from patterns of tacit knowledge learned from accumulated experiences navigating particular contexts and situations, can be further illustrated by insights from feminist scholarship. From the early 1980s, significantly influenced by the work of Carol Gilligan (1982) in her groundbreaking book *In A Different Voice,* feminist scholars have argued for multiple 'ways of knowing.' Gilligan's work critiqued the established psychological models produced by the leading theorists such as Piaget and Kohlberg whose work sought to measure 'universal' stages of human development and morality. Gilligan's critique was that these models were inherently embedded with values most commonly associated with western male patriarchal ways of thinking and acting. Gilligan, initially a researcher with Kohlberg, ultimately came to critique his model after her own research with women led her to take an alternate view of how women understood issues of judgment and decision-making. Gilligan's research uncovered that women demonstrated an alternative way of conceptualising decision-making, morality, and judgment, which stemmed from a 'relational' orientation in their thinking. Gilligan argued that Kohlberg's model was embedded in patriarchal values that valorised individual freedom, autonomy and adherence to abstract principles as the pinnacle of human development. Gilligan's research found the model failed to account for how women understood their judgment as reflected by their lived experience. This lived experienced included knowledge and understanding formed by being embedded within a 'particular' situation, and within a context of 'particular' relationships. Rather than following abstract rules or universals (episteme) to make decisions, Gilligan's research found that women considered the relationships involved and how decisions made might impact these relationships, and more often took the *particular context or situation* into consideration to determine what to do or how to act. Indeed context itself was viewed as an interdependent set of relationships that needed to be considered in decision-making (Gilligan, 1982). Gilligan reflected that this relational way of thinking didn't 'measure up' on human development scales since the scale itself was conceptualised within a set of

patriarchal and hierarchical values: autonomy and separation of self over connection and relationship with others.

This hierarchy served to both obscure and diminish women's experiences of the importance of relationships and subsequently, the ways in which women conceptualised their possible choices for action. Reflecting the discussion of how episteme and techne came to obscure phronesis, there are echoes of a similar pattern of subordination of differing forms of knowledge. In fact, Gilligan's work illustrates this similarity. Discussing a research study involving eleven-year old school children, 'Jake' and 'Amy,' Gilligan (1982) contrasts Jake's patriarchal epistemology of logic-based universal rules against Amy's more 'particular' and relational epistemology. Using a fictitious ethical dilemma to evaluate their responses against the model of moral development advanced by Kohlberg (1958), she writes:

> "[T]hese two children see two very different moral problems- Jake a conflict between life and property that can be resolved by logical deduction, Am*y* a fracture of human relationship that must be mended with its own thread" (Gilligan, 1982 p.30).

Gilligan proceeds, making the point that the Kohlberg model advances a view that the pinnacle of human moral development is an adherence to abstract universal moral principles. As such, the model itself implicitly elevates Jake's epistemological position but obscures Amy's response. Amy's response doesn't measure up because 'Amy' demonstrates an entirely different orientation towards judgment and decision-making:

> "Asking different questions that arise from different conceptions of the moral domain, the children arrive at answers that fundamentally diverge, and the arrangement of these answers as successive stages on a scale of increasing moral maturity calibrated by the logic of the boy's response misses the different truth revealed in the judgment of the girl. To the question, "What does he see that she does not?" Kohlberg's theory provides a ready response, manifest in the scoring of Jake's judgments a full stage higher than Amy's in moral maturity; to the question, "What does she see that he does not?" Kohlberg's theory has nothing to say. Since most of her responses fall through the sieve of Kohlberg's scoring system, her responses appear from his perspective to lie outside the moral domain" (ibid, p.30).

This relational orientation was the "different voice" that in Gilligan's view needed to be heard, and valued:

> "The different voice…is a relational voice: a voice that insists on staying in connection… so that psychological separations which have long been justified in the name of autonomy, selfhood, and freedom no longer appear as the *sine qua non* of human development but as a human problem" (ibid, p. xiii).

Gilligan's recognition of the existence and validity of the relational voice (oriented as it was towards the complexity of particulars and contexts of relationships rather than abstract rules) generated and extended further epistemic exploration in the ensuing years. For example, generating alternative views within social science as to what was considered valuable knowledge, what might be considered an established truth, as well as questioning the quest for objectivity over subjectivity (Stanley and Wise, 1993; Belenky et al, 1986). For the sake of retaining this chapter's focus on conceptualising phronesis, discussions of these implications for social science research will be sidestepped and revisited in chapter five on research methodology.

Inspired by Gilligan's work, Belenky et al, (1986) built upon these ideas to conduct further studies of feminist epistemologies, writing to describe differing ways of knowing as subjective, connected, separate, and constructed. Subjective knowledge is portrayed as the inner voice, intuitively tuned into the gut as a source of knowledge and decision-making (ibid, pp. 53-54). Listening to the inner voice for subjective knowers can often be viewed as a reaction against and a rejection of, an externalised voice of authority. Subjective knowledge may at its core adopt a rigid understanding of truth; however, it is a truth which lies within, gained from an inner source of authority as a result of experiences (ibid, pp. 52-75).

In addition to subjective knowing, 'connected' and 'separate' knowing are understood as recognition of external truths but with different approaches to determining validity. 'Separate' epistemologies use "impersonal procedures for establishing truth" while those using 'connected' epistemologies, echoing Gilligan's insights, see that knowledge and truth are in a context of relationship that

"emerges through care" (ibid, p.102). In this view, 'connected knowing' is conceptually closer to *understanding* while 'separate knowing' is closer to *knowledge*, the former including a greater intimacy between knower and subject and the latter containing more distance (ibid, pp. 100-101).

'Connected knowing' as a form of knowing proposed by Belenky et al (1986), was not seen as determined by gender, although it is suggested that it may be more often found in women. Similar to subjectivism, connected knowers viewed *experience* as the most trustworthy source of the knowledge. Rather than trusting outside experts, connected knowers sought to understand their own first-hand experiences, and viewed hearing from others about their first-hand experiences as a key to understanding (Belenky et al, 1986: pp. 112-113). The purpose was not to debate (as separate knowers might) abstract principles or positions but to understand the personal subjective experience contained in differing perspectives, because by understanding experiences it became possible to understand 'why.' As a result, for connected knowers:

> "The world becomes warmer and more orderly…. Connected knowers begin with an interest in the facts of other people's lives, but gradually shift the focus to other people's ways of thinking…Separate knowers learn through explicit formal instruction how to adopt a different lens-how, for example, to think like a sociologist. Connected knowers learn through empathy. Both learn to get out from behind their own eyes and use a different lens, in one case the lens of a discipline, in the other the lens of another person" (ibid, 115).

Connected knowers view expertise as relevant and credible only when it stems from those from a 'shared commonality' of experience (ibid, p.113). In this way, only those who have shared the same, or similar experiences, have a right to judge and evaluate. By contrast, separate knowers adhere to traditional understandings of expertise as generated by those whose status determines their authority (ibid, pp. 118-119).

Finally, constructed knowledge is explained as recognition of these multiple forms of knowledge as part and parcel of knowledge creation. Constructed knowledge is

viewed as an ability to integrate the varied types of knowledge and recognise the internal validity of one's own voice and experience while at the same time integrating knowledge learned from outside the self. Belenky et al (1986) describes constructed knowledge as:

> "Weaving together the strands of rational and emotive thought and of integrating objective and subjective knowing. Rather than extricating the self in the acquisition of knowledge, these women used themselves in rising to a new way of thinking…You let the inside out and outside in"
> (ibid, p.135).

Constructed knowers begin to understand that multiple truths are possible, that different truths may co-exist and even contradict each other; it demands a wider acceptance of complexity and ambiguity and resistance to dualistic thinking as truths may, in part, be context-dependent (ibid, p.150).

3.3.3 Links between ways of knowing and phronesis

When insights gained from feminist epistemologies are woven with the conceptual strands that identify phronesis as formed by the use of intuitive pattern recognition and tacit knowledge- the view of phronesis sharpens. Those who view judgment not in abstract rules but in the particular, in context, demonstrate a relational orientation. However, this orientation has axiological, analytical and explanatory implications because descriptively it illustrates a view and an understanding that context is both patterned and relational. For example, those who adopt phronetic epistemologies may be implicitly using this patterned way of thinking about their choices for action, because their experience of context is that it is embedded in an ecology of relationships. Therefore, a phronetic epistemology may in part also be adopted or formed when lived experience of externalised rules or authorities have not been helpful in navigating the context. Instead, the subjective inner voice is utilised for making a judgment, drawn from tacit knowledge of the patterns of lived experience.

Consequently, phronetic knowledge adopts and utilises a much broader set of 'ways of knowing' to judge. It draws from forms of knowledge that cannot be easily measured, or might be considered as subjective, embodied in gut feelings, intuition, or emotions and empathy. In fact, it may be that these more subjective truths are more readily relied upon if they have proved themselves useful in the lived experience on previous occasions. However, there is one more conceptual bridge to be built in order to demonstrate how phronetic knowledge (built from accumulated embodied experiences and embedded in an ecology of relationships) may be used to navigate context.

3.4 Phronesis as knowledge of context-for-action

Sociologist Pierre Bourdieu's (1990) scholarship using the concept of habitus is helpful to gather insights into ways those employing practical wisdom, phronesis, use it to navigate their contextual terrain. While not identical, the two concepts of habitus and phronesis are compatible and share some overlapping similarities. In particular, habitus is useful to better understand ways in which practical knowledge may draw from tacit understandings of the webbed relational nature of context to inform choices of action.

Bourdieu's concept of habitus emerged in part to better explain how individual agency and social structures both shaped social reality rather than sitting in opposition to each other, suggesting that while we are products of our social background and culture we have some choice as to how they are expressed (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992 p.19). However that set of choices is also generated from and set within the limitations of our social backgrounds and culture. Bourdieu's concept of habitus was influenced and formed in part as a reaction against the reductionism of Marxist and structuralism, as well as by his anthropological study of the traditional native Algerian society of the Kabyle in the early 1960s (Swartz, 1997). In observing the Kabyle, Bourdieu noticed that their behaviour was not regulated through explicitly codified rules but by internalised understandings of concepts such as justice and honour, and these concepts served

both to influence their agency but also shape their behaviour (Swartz, 1997 pp. 98-100). Bourdieu's definition of habitus is dense and somewhat impenetrable:

> "The conditionings associated with a particular class of conditions of existence produce habitus, systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principals which generate and organize practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary in order to attain them. Objectively 'regulated' and 'regular' without being in any way the product of obedience to rules, they can be collectively orchestrated without being the product of the organizing action of a conductor" (Bourdieu: 1990 p.53).

While perhaps all translations suffer such difficulties, Swartz examining the work of Bourdieu provides a more accessible definition:

> "Habitus results from early socialization experiences in which external structures are internalized. As a result, internalized dispositions of broad parameters and boundaries of what is possible or unlikely for a particular group in a stratified social world develop through socialization. Thus, on the one hand, habitus sets structural limits for action. On the other hand, habitus generates perceptions, aspirations, and practices that correspond to the structuring properties of earlier socialization" (Swartz, 1997 p.103).

Such structuring can become a deeply embedded determinant of action and can therefore, becomes tacit practice. Swartz writes that Bourdieu:

> "(E)mploys the language, 'practical knowledge' and 'sense of practice' to describe this fundamentally non-formalized, practical dimension of action…actors are not rule followers or norm obeyers but strategic improvisers who respond dispositionally to the opportunities and constraints offered by various situations" (Swartz, 1997 p.100).

However according to Bourdieu (1990), actions and practices are limited by the social conditioning and the influences that correspond to class, position, cultural background, and context. Therefore, while individual agency is a possibility, in most cases it is agency set within the context of the habitus. Moreover, because habitus has a generative function, it contains within it an internal logic that is both past and future oriented. Consequently, actions that do not correspond with the past are not considered for the future. As a result, habitus regenerates itself continually by limiting future actions. Bourdieu describes this as:

> "[B]eing the product of a particular class of objective regularities, the habitus tends to generate all the 'reasonable,' 'common-sense' behaviours (and only these) which are possible within the limits of these regularities, and which are likely to be positively sanctioned because they are objectively adjusted to the logic characteristic of a particular field, whose objective future they anticipate" (Bourdieu, 1990 p.56).

Habitus as a generative form shapes behaviour and actions such that individuals choose future actions that feel congruent with the past. Bourdieu uses this to explain why groups of people who are in subordinated roles maintain this subordinated position, actively excluding things that are "not for the likes of us" (ibid). This fluid movement of past and future dictates current choices of action:

> "The dispositions of habitus predispose actors to select forms of conduct are most likely to succeed in light of their resources and past experience. Habitus orients action according to anticipated consequences" (Swartz, 1997 p.106).

Phronesis as knowledge used to navigate habitus in the context of peacebuilding may account for ways in which practical knowledge works in a given environment to determine and shape judgments about courses of action in a particular set of circumstances, or to determine what courses of action are most relevant in a particular moment in time. It may also help to illuminate perceptions of the barriers that exist within a given context, and how those perceptions inform the scope decision-making and self-enforced limitations.

3.5 Building a conceptual frame for phronesis

Phronesis or practical wisdom, established here through insights grounded in Aristotelian philosophy but supported by a range of fields within social science, begins to take shape as an epistemology. It emerges as a form of knowledge that draws heavily from lived experience. Using multiple forms of knowing which demonstrate an integration of both subjective and objective experience, phronesis draws on explicit but also tacitly held pattern recognition of context to guide action for the 'particular.' Context, however, may be better understood in this regard as a form of habitus or ecology. Judgments about 'what to do' are drawn from the tacit recognition of patterns of context that are used to make choices in particular

situations, and processed fluidly and intuitively against what may or may not be viewed as possible in the given habitus. Difficult to name explicitly or to easily describe in words, such judgements illustrate a nuanced understanding of 'the context for action.' Flyvbjerg refers to this as a knowledge that has qualities that can "supplement and take over from analysis and rationality. These properties include context judgement, practice, trial and error, experience, common sense, intuition and bodily sensation" (Flyvbjerg, 2001 p.23).

Phronesis, is therefore, conceptualised here as both an embedded and embodied form of knowledge, with the following five dimensions:

- ***Experience:*** Practical wisdom draws heavily from and values knowledge gained from experience. Accumulated experiences allow the building up of patterns over time. The most trustworthy sources of knowledge within a phronetic epistemology are those who share common experiences, or who demonstrate embedded or context-knowledge. If experience is lacking, trustworthy exemplars are used as models of 'what to do.'

- ***Embodied*****:** Uses multiple forms of 'knowing' which demonstrate an integration of both subjective and objective experiences. Gut instinct, bodily sensations and affective experiences are valued; phronesis resists mind-body dualism.

- ***Organically Developed through Experimentation***: Learning generated by navigating uncertain and complex contexts using trial and error approaches, recognises and acknowledges non-linearity in outcomes and attributes value to action even if outside of techno-rational paradigm or metrics of measurability.

- ***Tacit Recognition of Context Patterns***: Context is viewed as an ecology of relationships that form patterns in a given habitus. Patterns of context may be initially invisible, implicit or tacit, but capable of being drawn upon in reflection and recognised explicitly.

- ***Context-Relational Judgments***: Judgments about, 'what to do,' or to make sense of uncertain contexts are drawn from tacit recognition of accumulated patterns of 'particulars' gained from previous experiences. In cases where there is little experience, 'rules' for navigation are made through trial and error, or gained explicitly by others as exemplars. As experience accumulates, judgments are processed fluidly and intuitively against what may or may not be viewed as possible in the given 'habitus' or given the patterns of 'particular' contexts. As a result, judgments are

viewed as context-dependent, given that abstract rules may be unable to generate or reflect navigational nuance.

3.6. Phronesis: valued-added for peacebuilding knowledge debates?

This next and final section of the chapter asks what value phronesis brings to peacebuilding knowledge debates? An article by Annette Jorgensen (2006) on changes within organic food production in Ireland illustrates knowledge debates similar to those that have surfaced in the field of peacebuilding. Jorgensen highlights the tensions between the advancement of technical and 'scientific' standardised food production processes against local tacit knowledge handed down by generations of farmers sharing knowledge of sustainable food growing practices. She describes such tacit local knowledge as developing:

> "[F]rom an intimate relationship with the local natural world, the local natural conditions and the species...This type of knowledge was local and it developed over generations through the practical experience of working with the soil and animals. Such tacit local knowledge could not be explained through words alone, but had to be demonstrated in practice. It applied only to specific place it has been developed, and made sense as part of a wider understanding of one's relationship to one's land holdings" (Jorgensen, 2006 pp.120-121).

The article contrasts this form of knowledge with the rise of technical chemical fertilisers able to be spread universally across any type of land, while local learning and knowledge came to be replaced with a reliance on expert scientific advice and instruction. Using the Aristotelian terms, the local organic farmer utilised phronesis, practical wisdom, while the agro-business relied on episteme, universal science and techne, technical skills. Jorgensen's example, although used for farming, echoes well-established critiques of the international practice of peacebuilding and its failure to prioritise local knowledge or local peacebuilders (Richmond, 2005; Donais, 2009; Mac Ginty, 2012, 2013; Autessere, 2014; Hellmüller, 2014). While a part of the focus of the critique centres on issues of power, and how peacebuilding imposed on local people lacks legitimacy and ownership (Donais, 2009; 2011),

equally important but less often discussed as comprehensively however, is how knowledge gaps hinder peacebuilding relevancy.

As has been shown, relevancy requires context-knowledge. However, several examples from the literature illustrate how local knowledge is not viewed as a key source of important context-based knowledge. Furthermore, even when context-knowledge is understood as important –it has been conceptualised more superficially, as knowledge able to be acquired technically, without lived-experience. The conceptualisation of phronesis further amplifies how and why these assumptions are problematic.

Hellmüller describes, for example, that barriers to cooperation between local and international NGOs in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) were exacerbated when different knowledge capacities were valued and context-knowledge dismissed as "information" (Hellmüller, 2014 p.15). In this example, international agencies prioritised their own thematic knowledge and technical expertise while simultaneously failing to see the locals who brought deep context-knowledge as a valuable resource, necessary to ensure relevancy. This perspective rests on the assumption that technical expertise and knowledge are more valuable than context-knowledge:

> "The international actors present themselves as the technicians bringing expertise on different topics. Thereby, the context knowledge of local peacebuilding actors is usually considered as information, rather than knowledge…The question is asked not what peace looks like from a local perspective, but how the peace that is designed outside the country can best be implemented locally…This explains why peacebuilding processes are more strongly influenced by outside expertise than knowledge of what works in a given setting, what already exists in this context and what people having lived through the conflict might prioritize" (Hellmüller, 2014 pp.15-16).

This report continues by citing an example of a mediation training held in DRC by an international organisation to build conflict resolution skills. Attendees at the training stated that although they had successful non-formalised experiences in mediation, they were made to feel as though their own previous approaches were wrong and they did not have the right 'techniques.' Hellmüller concludes that "local

capacities in mediation which are adapted to the context are often overlooked and it is often forgotten that these actors conduct mediations on a daily basis without their capacities being recognised" (ibid, pp. 16-17). Their ability to adapt their own processes to the context is overlooked because "context-knowledge is often valued as less important than thematic knowledge" (ibid, p. 15). This point echoes my own experiences as profiled in the prologue. My own deference to the 'theory' and the 'skills' of mediation that I had been taught in my academic courses caused me to subordinate and ignore my own instincts and observations which could have helped me to read the context between the two particular disputants.

A second problematic assumption concerning context-knowledge is its reduction to technique- as a skill of analysis that can be gained without local experience. Acknowledging the necessity for both technical thematic knowledge and local context-knowledge, Autesserre (2014) reflects on a "clear in-balance" between the two in international practice (Autesserre, 2014 p.72). She gives a sobering example of being sent first to the DRC and later to Afghanistan as a 'context-analyst' without any previous knowledge of either country:

> "[I]n charge of analyzing political, military, social, and humanitarian conditions on the ground…I had no pre-existing knowledge of either country, and I learned personally how frustrating it was to feel that I was not properly equipped to provide the kinds of analyses that were key to helping beneficiaries" (Autesserre, 2014 p.80).

Clearly, the view that context-knowledge can be reduced to a technique without any corollary lived experience is problematic. The conceptualisation of phronesis however, clarifies that judgment for relevancy requires tacit and explicit sources of knowledge. However, the former can only be gained through experience over time. To recognise that both tacit and explicit forms of knowledge are necessary for ensuring peacebuilding and conflict transformation relevancy is not new. From as early as 1995, Lederach advocated strongly that in order for any intervention to be relevant it should tap into and use the implicitly held 'local' knowledge of context using an elicitive approach (Lederach, 1995). His first text, *Preparing for Peace* (1995), clearly adopted Freirian emancipatory perspectives on knowledge, power

and intellectual hegemony. Lederach argued that training should be dialectical, viewing local people as primary resources of relevant knowledge. While covered in the literature review it is worthwhile to review his central ideas on this topic, he states:

1. People in setting are a key resource, not recipients.
2. Indigenous knowledge is a pipeline to discovery, meaning, and appropriate action.
3. Participation of local people in the process is central.
4. Building from available local resources fosters self-sufficiency and sustainability.
5. Empowerment involves a process that fosters awareness-of-self in context and validates discovery, naming and creation through reflection and action

(Lederach, 1995 p.31).

In an elicitive training model, participants themselves are in charge of their learning, directing the process according to their own needs. For Lederach, those in context hold the greatest level of knowledge about their own conflict and therefore are best suited as the drivers of any intervention by outsiders:

> "By knowledge-as-resource I refer to the often implicit but rich understanding people have about their setting. Included is their knowledge about how conflict emerges and develops among them and about how people try to handle and manage that conflict. Also included are their understandings about what things mean; that is, how language, perception, interpretation, and meaning are constructed around events and interactions in their context" (ibid,p.31).

Lederach's model of intervention is accompaniment; the 'local' is in the driver seat steering the car, while the outside intervener provides the petrol money and some ideas about maps that could be useful. In fact, at several junctures during the trip, the intervener gets into the back seat and starts taking notes about how to change his maps, learning new routes from the driver with 'local' knowledge of the roads. As an example, Lederach's conceptualisation of the 'insider-partial' developed from working with groups in Latin America who critiqued his mediation model as being "too gringo" (Lederach, 1995 p.38). This critique led to a rethinking of the role of the mediator in order to re-conceptualise it to become more reflective, useful and

relevant to the context. Instead of a neutral outsider, the insider-partial mediator used those who were known to and trusted by disputants (Wehr and Lederach 1991 p.87). Lederach modelled his own elicitive approach to intervention by deconstructing and reconstructing his model, arguably because it lacked context-knowledge.

The conceptualisation of phronesis demonstrates its complementarity to Lederach's elicitive model of conflict transformation training. Lederach writes that the elicitive approach begins by using implicit forms of knowledge of conflict and ways it is managed as a starting point in training and that making the implicit explicit is key:

> "Throughout the training process, serious effort is made to foster a level of innovation and creativity that permits participants to make explicit and take ownership in the approaches and models that emerge from their implicit understandings. The movement from implicit to explicit knowledge is discovery" (Lederach, 1995 p.60).

While Lederach's development of the elicitive approach is framed as a cross-cultural model of intervention, the conceptualisation of phronesis illuminates that in fact, the elicitive model uses phronesis. For example, the elicitive model taps into this phronetic form of knowledge which he describes as implicit knowledge of conflict that is "common-sense taken for granted" (Lederach, 1995 p.57). The elicitive approach uses the implicit common-sense understandings of conflict in a given locale, formed from tacit recognition of patterns of context and judgment-of-the-context-for action, as a starting point. This, as he states, is an important key for innovation and creativity in working towards approaches germane to the given context.

The priority given to taking an elicitive approach, it could be argued, was not however, as strongly emphasised in Lederach's next text *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies (1997)* published two years later. While the text continues to refer to the need to build upon local knowledge and cultural resources, it also marks a shift in terminology, using word such as: 'strategic' (ibid, p. 109), 'design for social change' (ibid, p.77), 'integrated

framework for peacebuilding (ibid, p.73), and 'reconciliation infrastructure' (ibid, pp.105-106). Such language he viewed was necessary to build a case for the long-term vision needed for the transformation of conflict. Writing in the prologue he states:

> "Metaphorically, peace is seen not merely as a stage in time or condition. It is a dynamic social construct. Such a conceptualization requires a process of building, involving investment in materials, architectural design and coordination of labor, laying a foundation, and detailed finish work, as well as continuing maintenance" (ibid, 20).

The preceding quote is illustrative of two tensions that in many ways still exist; the first sentence speaks to the view of peace as organic, process-driven and change-embracing, while the second conceptualises peace as a solid structure, permanent, requiring regular maintenance, but a solid structure in design and build nonetheless. While, such shift in discourse was likely necessary at the time and useful for bridging and expanding debate beyond "the traditional statist diplomacy" (ibid, xvi), it could be argued, however, that such terminology lent itself towards a more technical conceptualisation of peace. One characterisation might be that having proved valuable, the prototype model of peacebuilding intervention was given resources and moved into mass production. Going back to the driver and passenger metaphor, there was no longer just one car out on the road but many. Mass production increased both professionalisation and the need for technical expertise. Strategic planning ushered in peacebuilding design and a need to ensure accountability and value for money. Using the metaphor, mass production may have opened the door for blueprint maps, and in some cases, for interveners to take over the driving completely. There is some evidence of this dynamic; research suggests there is a proliferation of Lederach's middle-out approach (Paffenholz 2010, pp. 59-60). While 'strategic peace' discourse in tandem with professionalisation opened the door for a technical peace, as mentioned previously, this has been to the detriment at times to the necessary nuanced-context knowledge needed for relevancy (Autessere, 2014; Hellmüller, 2014).

Revisiting Lederach's *Preparing for Peace* with the additional conceptualisation that 'local knowledge' includes phronesis has the potential to amplify why 'local knowledge' is as important as technical knowledge. In fact, phronesis may also add a depth and nuance necessary such that local knowledge itself wouldn't be dismissed as 'information.' Finally, the conceptualisation of phronesis demonstrated in this chapter could potentially prevent context-knowledge from becoming merely another technical skill to be acquired with no lived experience of a given context.

Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to introduce phronesis and to illustrate the concept with examples from academic literature in order to consider both its validity and value. It was refined further with the aid of social science scholars of professional practice (Schön and Argyris, 1974; Schön, 1983; Eraut, 1994; Kinsella, 2012), urban planning (Flyvbjerg, 2001), psychology and philosophy (Schwartz and Sharpe, 2010; Polanyi, 1966), feminist epistemology (Gilligan, 1982; Belenky, et al., 1986) and sociology (Bourdieu, 1990; Swartz, 1997).

Drawing from these sources, phronesis was conceptualised as an epistemology and a form of context-dependent knowledge that draws heavily from lived experience. Using multiple forms of 'knowing' which demonstrate an integration of both embodied subjective and objective experience. Phronesis draws on explicit but also tacitly held pattern recognition of context to guide action, built up over time. Context, however, is not static but may be better understood as a web of relationships, a habitus or ecology. Judgments about 'what to do' are drawn from the tacit recognition of patterns of context, and used to make choices in particular situations, processed fluidly and intuitively against what may or may not be viewed as possible in the given habitus, evidenced by a nuanced understanding of the context-for-action.

Phronesis, particularly in its Aristotelian definition, is a concept compatible with the aspiration to build peace. Embedded in his discussion on conduct and virtues for

living a good life, Aristotle argues that through this combination of experience and judgment, those with phronesis are able to determine what course of action will lead to well-being or *eudemonia*. *Eudemonia* is considered important, not just for individuals, but for groups:

> "Now it thought to be a mark of a man of practical wisdom to be able to deliberate well about what is good and expedient for himself, not in some particular respect, e.g. about what sorts of thing conduce to health or to strength, but what sorts of thing conduce to the good life in general" (Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics 1140a 25-30).

Eudemonia is, in many respects, what those working to build peace and transform systemic destructive conflicts are aiming toward. However, what seems crucial in this discussion is that phronesis, or those who may utilise phronetic knowledge, use this form of knowledge as a source of deliberation and judgment in relation to action. According to Aristotle good deliberation for action takes both the universal and particular situation into consideration when determining what to do and will lead to the good life: "Practical wisdom, then, must be a reasoned and true state of capacity to act with regard to human goods" (Nic. Ethics, 1140b 20-21).

The concept of phronesis can be considered to engage with current tensions that exist in the field and within academia about the nature of intervention (action) and knowledge (deliberation and judgment) for peacebuilding. Furthermore, phronesis, if conceptualised and re-introduced, also has potential to add an important contribution to current peacebuilding debates if viewed as a necessary source of knowledge to cultivate in practice and academia. In particular it may help build bridges to further support the 'local' turn. Authors have suggested that currently, local context-knowledge is subordinated to thematic (technical) knowledge and theoretic (epistemic) knowledge (Autesserre, 2014; Hellmüller, 2014). Phronesis however helps to explain why local knowledge is a necessary form of knowledge for peacebuilding, revealing a much more nuanced understanding of a conflict context-gained through tacit knowledge and lived experience. Phronesis may also be argued to have a greater reach and may potentially do more to empower the aims contained within the local turn. Viewing local knowledge as containing phronesis amplifies 'local

knowledge' by including 'judgment of what to do' in the given particular situation and context. The view of expertise thus shifts from those who hold the 'technical' knowledge to those who have context-knowledge and more importantly, can demonstrate deliberation and judgment of the context-for-action. By including judgment, this shift in emphasis towards a question of who has relevant context-knowledge legitimises and necessitates local knowledge beyond that of "information," paving the way for greater recognition of both its validity and value.

Aristotle's development of phronesis saw it as a virtue necessary for both individuals and groups in order to be able to live a good life. However, thus far, phronesis has been elided in much of everyday life, and is not a word used currently in our modern lexicon. Despite this, it is a concept that is useful to be rediscovered, particularly for its utility in peacebuilding and conflict transformation theory and practice. Crucial for relevant peacebuilding intervention, re-introducing phronesis may support and amplify why local context-knowledge is vital. Thus, it offers a challenge to the predominance of the 'techno-rational (Schön, 1983) and technocratic (Mac Ginty, 2012) epistemologies of practice, and most importantly, to better equip practitioners to navigate the complex, dynamic terrain of conflict.

Finally, given that phronesis has been a form of knowledge that has been lost to our modern lexicon and more generally elided, the value of conceptualising phronesis for peacebuilding also lies in the act of naming- of making the invisible visible. To recap, phronesis, is conceptualised in this chapter as a form of knowledge that is:

- *Experienced*
- *Embodied*
- *Organically developed through experimentation*
- *Built upon over time using tacit recognition of context patterns*
- *Using context-relational judgements*

Having thus conceptualised phronesis, the next chapter will seek to use this conceptualisation of phronesis as a benchmark and a tool of analysis. To do so, 50 years of grassroots and civil society peacebuilding practice will be reviewed. The purpose of the chapter is two-fold. Firstly, it seeks to provide a background to the

time-span of the research question which covers 50 years of grassroots and civil society peacebuilding in Northern Ireland. Given the priority within the conceptualisation of phronesis to the importance of a deep and nuanced view of context, this is important. Secondly, given the invisibility of phronesis prior to this conceptualisation, it will consider whether or how using a lens of phronesis may alter current views of the impact and value of this body of peacebuilding activity

Chapter 4: Grassroots and civil society peacebuilding in Northern Ireland, 1965-2015

Introduction

As described in Chapter 2, the literature on grassroots-level and civil society-based peacebuilding efforts in Northern Ireland on the whole presents a tepid picture when measured against its impact on building the political peace (Brewer, 2011). Peacebuilding practice has been described as lacking in strategy (Cochrane and Dunn, 2002; Cochrane, 2001b) with a conclusion primarily drawn that its impact on political peace has been indirect- helpful perhaps for creating a warmer climate for political negotiations (McCartney, 1999; Cochrane and Dunn, 2002; Cochrane, 2001b). Given such assessments, it is unsurprising that any possible learning from such activities has not been prioritised or viewed as valuable, preventing wider lessons being learnt through documentation, distillation or dissemination (Kelly and Braniff, 2016).

The conceptualising of phronesis in Chapter 3, however, suggests an alternative explanation to view what might look incoherent. Practical knowledge conceptualised as phronesis is context-dependent and concerned with 'particulars.' This suggests that peacebuilding initiated by grassroots-level and civil society-based peacebuilders becomes most clear when considered within a particular context and what was deemed possible in that situation. As Schwartz and Sharpe (2010) suggest:

> "Answering the question 'What should I do' almost always depends on the particulars of the situation…to imagine the consequences…to figure what's possible and not just ideal" (Schwartz and Sharpe, 2010 p.8).

Rather than measuring by the yardstick of the political peace, this chapter will use phronesis as a tool of analysis. Providing a snapshot view of some of the practical activities undertaken at the grassroots-level and within civil society in Northern Ireland over a 50-year time-period (1965 to 2015), this chapter has a three-fold

purpose. Firstly, to demonstrate- albeit in small scale- a range of activities taken over different phases of time; secondly, to consider what these actions may have contributed within their own particular situation or context; and thirdly, to reflect upon any recurring patterns that may demonstrate learning acquired about social change processes in deeply divided contexts which may serve to deepen current understanding of such initiatives.

In order to begin any description of practical peacebuilding activities in Northern Ireland from the perspective of a 50-year period of time (1965-2015) several caveats are needed. The first caveat is that history in the context of a divided society is contested and any interpretation is subject to dispute. Differences in historical interpretations of both causes and consequences of the conflict exist. Attempts to strive for balance have been made by drawing upon a variety of authors, and where possible, including sources from authors based in civil society in order to help maintain a broader and more horizontal view. Secondly, as stated, this chapter will only paint broad strokes of practice. Accounts are not intended, nor would it be possible to be, exhaustive. Any discussion of practical activities also necessitates decisions about what should be defined as peacebuilding activities. As Richmond (2005) suggests, peace is a contested term; therefore, explicit definitions are helpful. This chapter employs Lederach's (1997) conceptualisation of peacebuilding and conflict transformation previously discussed in Chapter 2, as long-term processes concerned both with addressing the root causes of conflict and their manifestations within structures and relationships. Given that the focus of this thesis concerns grassroots and civil society peacebuilding, attention in this chapter primarily rests on practical activities which intersect with the bottom two levels of Lederach's pyramid of peacebuilding (see Figure 1 in Chapter 2) which is defined as grassroots-level and middle-range level (Lederach, 1997). A third caveat is that the chapter assumes some knowledge of the wider context of conflict in Northern Ireland, its main protagonists and the broad issues of dispute.

A chronological approach has been taken to examine activities within six timeframes influenced by Curle (1971), Galtung (1975), and Lederach (1995, 1997),

which as mentioned, views peacebuilding as not only seeking to end physical violence but address root causes of division. The chapter is organised by stages of conflict and by six phases of peacebuilding. Where possible, the titles of peacebuilding phases were taken directly from common everyday phrases found in the research data, either in desk-research or mentioned by interviewees. Shown also as a table (Table 1), the peacebuilding timeframe is outlined in six phases:

Phase One: Increasing the volume on the conflict radio
(latent conflict from 1965 to 1968)

Phase Two: Crisis response and fire fighting
(early eruption of manifest conflict from 1969 to 1972)

Phase Three: Holding societal threads together
(conflict escalation from 1973 to 1979)

Phase Four: Getting on with it
(conflict normalisation from 1980 to 1991)

Phase Five: Tilling the soil for political agreement
(ceasefires, negotiations and political agreement from 1992 to 1998)

Phase Six: Two steps forward one step back
(post-agreement and power-sharing from 1999 to 2015)

Table 1: **Grassroots and civil society peacebuilding timeframe 1965-2015**

Years	Stage of Conflict	Phase of Peacebuilding	Types of Activity/Examples
1965-1968	Latent	Phase One: Increasing the volume on the conflict radio	Advocacy for civil rights, non-violent demonstrations and civil disobedience Promoting reconciliation
1969-1972	Early Eruption of Manifest Conflict	Phase Two: Crisis response and fire fighting	De-escalating conflict Maintaining cohesion Anti-intimidation in the workplace Protesting direct violence
1973-1979	Conflict Escalation	Phase Three: Holding societal threads together	Political intermediaries Community development Rallying the public for non-violence
1980-1991	Conflict Normalisation Anglo-Irish Agreement (1985)	Phase Four: Getting on with It	Human rights advocacy Supporting prisoners First integrated school, peace education Shared inter-faith communities Mediation introduced Supporting victims
1992-1998	Ceasefire, Negotiations and Agreement Ceasefires (1994-1995) GFA (1998)	Phase Five: Tilling the soil for political agreement	Back-channel private dialogue Public inquiry and dialogue De-militarisation GRIT model Interface-focused engagement 'YES' campaign for Good Friday Agreement referendum
1999-2015	Post-Agreement Power-sharing	Phase Six: Two steps forward one step back	Police reform training and support Restorative justice practice introduced Dialogue and storytelling projects

4.1 Phase 1: Increasing the volume on the conflict radio (1965 to 1968)

When considering peacebuilding that emerged during this phase it is possible to see the confluence of both a local and global social political milieu on peacebuilding activists. In Northern Ireland, in what can be described as a latent stage of conflict practice demonstrated a desire to surface and dismantle the conflict's structural dimensions as well as to encourage the bridging of relational divides. With expectations on the rise after the arrival of the more moderate Captain Terence O'Neill as the Prime Minister of Northern Ireland in 1963, Darby (1983) suggests hope for social and political reform in Northern Ireland increased. This more progressive outlook chimed with the times as globally progressive trends emerged across parts of Europe and the United States.

Advocacy activities were used to address imbalances of power and discriminatory practices embedded in local political governance structures, while ecumenism and interfaith reconciliation sought to explore relational divisions and counter historic inter-communal mistrust between Catholic and Protestant. Looking outwards, inspiration and models for social intervention were found globally and replicated locally. For example, local civil rights campaigners adopted tactics of direct action modelled by the US civil rights movement, and inter-faith efforts were influenced by wider ecumenist trends of reconciliation ushered in by the World Council of Churches and Vatican II.

In the local context however, communal tensions and fault lines remained. Changes promised by the new Prime Minister O'Neill were perceived as either too slow for Nationalists or too fast for political Unionists (Barritt, 1982). Civil rights demonstrations aimed at bringing attention to institutional discrimination mainly faced by the Nationalist community were initially non-violent. Viewed as a necessary tool of advocacy to pressure government by Nationalists, Unionists viewed activities with suspicion, as a Trojan horse for the Irish Republican Army (IRA) whose border campaign had only recently ended. Likewise, ecumenical efforts were accused of diluting religious orthodoxies and traditions and promoting a

'Rome-ward' trend (Taggart, 2004). Consequently, this phase was important because action that might have initially been aimed at peacebuilding to address root conflict, also arguably played a role in shifting the conflict context. By the end of this phase Northern Ireland had moved from a primarily structurally violent phase of conflict towards an eruption into physical violence. While this period began with hope, optimism and rhetoric of change, by its end, Northern Ireland was poised on the brink of civil war.

'Turning up the volume' with advocacy for civil rights

The Campaign for Social Justice (CSJ), started by Dungannon Doctor Conn McCluskey and his wife Patricia, had since its formation in January 1964 sought to increase pressure for change by lobbying Westminster directly. The aim of CSJ was to highlight institutional discrimination in public housing allocation, employment, and unfair electoral practices that disproportionately affected the Catholic population. According to Hennessey (2005), CSJ was different in that it sought to use letter-writing campaigns directed toward MPs in the House of Commons, targeting MPs with Irish constituencies believing that the incoming Labour government of Harold Wilson might be more sympathetic to their concerns (Hennessey, 2005). However, by the late 1960s, frustration began to mount, as legislative pressure was perceived as having little effect. With social justice and civil rights concerns appearing not to be successful in gaining political ground within Unionist dominated local government, the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association (NICRA) was formed in February 1967 to use non-violent civil disobedience to address issues such as social housing and unemployment (Arthur, 1980). Accusing the O'Neill government of not living up to its promises of reform, NICRA planned its first march for August 1968, to simulate the US civil rights march from Selma to Birmingham by marching from Coalisland to Dungannon. Two thousand protestors assembled in Dungannon and were faced by 1500 Loyalist counter-demonstrators, led by Ian Paisley. Despite the counter-protests, this initial march passed off without any serious disruption.

One reason to reflect with greater detail on the civil rights movement is to consider how using non-violent civil disobedience (a tool of peacebuilding used to address structural injustices, see Sharp, 1973; Albert, 1985; Burrowes, 1996) played a partial role in shifting the conflict context from latent to manifest. For this reason the second civil rights march held in Derry-Londonderry on October 5, 1968 is considered pivotal (Taggart, 2004; Prince and Warner, 2012) with authors suggesting that on that day:

> "More than any other single event, the march and the public reaction to it can be said to have launched the Troubles" (Taggart, 2004 p.26).
>
> "[A] strong claim to being the second most significant date in twentieth century Irish history…. The fifth October 1968 did not just mark the shift from one era of history to another, it was essential to bringing about that shift" (Prince and Warner, 2012 p. 4).

Planned in Belfast but held in Derry-Londonderry, scholars Prince and Warner (2012) suggest that shifting organisational dynamics impacted preparation for the second march. Noting that Derry-Londonderry-based organisers were more radical, Prince and Warner quote Eamonn McCann, a local activist, as saying "our conscious, if unspoken, strategy was to provoke the police into overreaction and thus spark off mass reaction against the authorities" (Prince and Warner, 2012 p.34). Prince and Warner argue that Derry-Londonderry 'radicals' were well known to the local police commanders within the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC), but that Belfast-based NICRA leadership were not as aware of local dynamics (ibid).

The march route was perceived by some as controversial and nearly led to its cancellation after parts of the route were banned by the Home Affairs minister who claimed it would clash with local Protestant/Loyalist populations. The fact that parts of the route were banned served as a rally cry, forcing key politicians within Nationalism to support the march, but causing a split with organisers. Deciding to defy the ban, the march went ahead. 400 marchers were met by a police line at Craigavon Bridge and prevented from continuing on. NICRA leaders attempted unsuccessfully to get the crowd to disperse, and asked marchers to go home. Those

attempting to disperse were then caught between two police cordons and, according to Prince and Warner, were met by RUC officers with heavy and disproportionate force. According to Arthur (1980), 77 civilians and 11 policemen were injured that day during the march and in subsequent rioting in Derry. The scenes were filmed by camera crews, and brought international attention to Northern Ireland.

Following the events of that day, a chain of events both at grassroots-level and political-levels was set into motion. Student activists involved in a sit-down protest over the police brutality in Derry-Londonderry formed the more radical People's Democracy, and the Nationalist party officially withdrew from Stormont. Over the subsequent weeks, civil rights marches continued with increasing numbers and by the end of November 1968, met with success as pressure for change stimulated by the advocacy was met by a package of legislative reforms (Darby, 1983). Despite, and perhaps as a result of legislative advances, tensions and pressures remained high. Moderate members of the civil rights movement called for a break from public demonstrations to give the Stormont government time to prove willing to make the changes, and take the heat out of the situation (Barritt, 1982).

> "This was the time for the demonstrators to leave the streets to consolidate their considerable gains…. The civil rights movement, having tasted success, was in no mood to sit back and leave the Unionist Government in peace…. In many of the minority, who harbour grievances, having had no effective political voice for half a century, resentment builds up until measures which once would have given satisfaction, if they had been freely granted, are now seen to be too little and too late" (Barritt, 1982 p.8).

Instead, civil rights marches over the next six months would increasingly experience violent confrontations with local Protestant Loyalist counter-protesters and further accusations of police heavy handedness. Authors suggest that violence within the movement increased because civil rights leaders "could not control their own people" (Prince and Warner, 2012 p.124).

While it does not do justice to leapfrog over important events that consolidated the shift from latent phase into manifest violent conflict, for the sake of brevity it is

necessary. Several authors writing about these times suggest that the period between October 1968 and August 1969 was pivotal in setting a trajectory for the Troubles. Events, such as the People's Democracy march that was attacked by counter-demonstrators and off-duty B-Specials at Burntollet Bridge, became watersheds that shifted the context of the conflict (Barritt, 1982; Taggart, 2004; Bleakley, 1972; McKeown, 1984). As violence escalated, those with more moderate views left the movement and NICRA increasingly was unable to maintain its initial commitment to non-violence. The result was:

> "The period October 1968-January 1969 was the last moment in the history of Northern Ireland when restraint might have prevailed, reform been won, and sectarian passions kept dormant. After that, there was little anyone could do until those passions had expended themselves, or proved their murderous unreason" (McKeown, 1984 p.44).

Finding a frequency for reconciliation

The relational dimensions of the conflict, described above as 'sectarian passions,' were also of concern to civil society actors wishing to 'turn up the volume' for change during this phase. In particular, faith-based responses in Northern Ireland were in part a result of increased local support for ecumenism. Prior to this, one description of the history of inter-church relations was that:

> "[A]nti-Romanism was an entrenched feature of Irish Protestantism, anti-Protestantism was a marked feature of Irish Catholicism, and each side was content in its isolationism" (Hurley cited in Taggart, 2004 p.84).

For example, the Presbyterian Church demonstrated a softening stance by issuing a statement to the Catholic Church asking for forgiveness for historical injustices. The development of ecumenical all-Ireland bodies such as the Irish Council of Churches also sparked a wider interest in human rights and reforms in Northern Ireland (ibid, p.24). It was also at this stage that a 'new' kind of local peace group emerged, as up until this point, active local peace groups such as the Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR) were pacifists with a focus on international anti-war activities rather than local issues of conflict (Mitchell, 1978). The Corrymeela Community, the first faith-

based organisation to be focused on reconciliation, was founded in 1965 (ibid, 1978 pp.34-35).

Corrymeela was galvanised by the same social milieu that produced student leaders in the civil rights movement, influenced by the growth in student activism and political awareness at Queen's University Belfast in the early 1960s. Ray Davey, the Presbyterian Chaplain at Queen's University who would become the founder and first leader of Corrymeela, drew also from his own personal experiences of conflict and war. A chaplain during World War II, Davey had been taken Prisoner of War and then appointed chaplain in the prison camp. This experience, he writes, was to affect him in profound ways and provide a model for building community and dialogue in a context of difference and division (Davey, 1993 pp. 57-64). Drawing inspiration from intentional communities used to progress social change such as the Iona Community in Scotland and the Agape Community in Italy, the Corrymeela Community was founded when Davey and his students raised funds to buy premises on the north coast of Northern Ireland. Early reconciliation activities included work camps and conferences with a focus on bringing people together from different political and religious traditions to provide a space to meet, learn about each other, and build trust (Mitchell, 1978 pp. 34-35). Reflecting on the context of the time, Ray Davey writes that among his students there was growing dissatisfaction with the political and social status quo and that communal polarisation was increasing. As the Troubles unfolded, Corrymeela was viewed as an alternative space for dialogue:

> "Soon it became clear that a choice was opening up. For the Nationalist the choice was between pursuing a peaceful way of working for change, or getting involved in violence and 'the armed struggle'. For the student from a Unionist background the choice again was either to follow a peaceful process for change or, as many did, just to 'opt out' and live a private life. Very quickly we began to grasp the importance of our existence as an alternative to violence and apathy, by offering the way of co-operation between the two traditions…. [o]ur task was to try, even in a small way, to make this alternative visible" (Davey, 1993 p. 80).

Now Northern Ireland's oldest reconciliation group, Corrymeela has, since its founding, played a variety of roles. For example, it offered emergency

accommodation for families as respite from the violence in the early 1970s, facilitated the growth of grassroots-led efforts to aid victims of conflict (the Cross Group), supporting the introduction of mediation (Mediation Northern Ireland) peace education (Community Relations in Schools), and the founding of Northern Ireland's first integrated school (Lagan College) in the 1980s. However, at the time of its founding in 1965, it was a first sustained effort at creating a joint location with the sole purpose of building inter-communal relationships. It was also important in the context of the physical and geographic segregation of communities to establish a shared space and community with the sole intention to build relationships and encourage dialogue in a context that was, as Morrow states, a conflict rapidly evolving from a stage of "cold war" (Morrow, 1995 p.39) towards manifest and violent confrontation.

Another similar early reconciliation effort, albeit non-residentially based, was Protestant and Catholic Encounter (PACE). PACE began in January 1969, when, out of concern about a potential Protestant backlash emerging from the unfolding civil rights movement Desmond Mock an English Presbyterian Minister, wrote to the press with a suggestion that interdenominational groups should meet. According to Barritt, PACE was officially launched in March 1969 with 30 members through a conference on 'Understanding Each Other' (Barritt, 1982 p.102). Sub-groups were formed across the province and co-chaired by a Protestant and Catholic, the purpose was to get to know one another, learn to work together, and prevent violence from breaking out (ibid). Barritt records that PACE members met with O'Neill to propose that government form an official public body dedicated to improving communal relationships and suggests this may have had some influence on the government's development of the Ministry of Community Relations, and the independent Community Relations Commission later that summer (Barritt, 1982 p.102). PACE persisted in their efforts throughout subsequent phases and was active in promoting ecumenical reconciliation until 1995.

Reflecting overall on the early reconciliation efforts and faith-based activities of this period, these activities were primarily oriented towards relationship-building and

dialogue-building activities such as work camps, inter-church meetings and conferences. However, a criticism of ecumenical groups was that they sometimes lacked representation from communities most directly affected by communal divisions or violence, and that support for ecumenism from local area congregations and parishes was not strong (Taggart, 1971). In a letter to the editor of the Belfast Telegraph from 1971, Taggart in his role as organising secretary of the Irish Council of Churches responded to criticism aimed at the churches for their lack of response to escalating events:

> "Cooperation at certain level of leadership exists within the churches" [but relationships at the local level are] "depressing, characterized by ecumenical timidity, indifference and even hostility….What can be done about this? I am afraid that the ICC can help little at this all-important level with its part time staff already stretched. PACE groups, Peace Committees and an assortment of similar local groups are a recent encouraging development. One would have to say however that the prospects for local ecumenics are not very encouraging in many areas" (Taggart, 1971 p5).

Another tension in inter-church activities according to Taggart (2004) which would become increasingly challenging during the next timeframe of peacebuilding was trying to find a balanced response against a context of rising paramilitarism and sectarian conflict. He describes that government security policies in particular, produced internal tensions for ecumenical bodies. For example, in later years when internment was introduced (discussed as part of the next phase) it was condemned by the Catholic leadership but initially supported by the three main Protestant churches. Such tensions would surface again among other organisations trying to work inter-communally and will be revisited in subsequent sections of this chapter.

Conclusion

Reflecting on this phase of peacebuilding with a view towards phronesis and to consider what such activities may mean as efforts to promote change within a particular context, several points are suggested. The pace and timing of societal change was simultaneously perceived as either too fast and too slow. Straddling any space between was a challenge- particularly when the middle ground decreased. If

phronesis is understood as, in part, acquired by experience- this period may evidence, both an absence of experience and practical consideration for the localised context.

The civil rights movement, for example, borrowed a model of civil disobedience that was not germane to Northern Ireland and lacked the years of preparation that had accompanied its use in the United States. Without such training, maintaining a commitment to nonviolence was arguably challenged from the beginning- for example, the historical valorisation of armed struggle had been recently marked with a celebration in 1966 of the 50 year anniversary of the Easter rising.

Ruane and Todd (1996) note that the leadership within the civil rights movement did not factor in the sectarian geography of Northern Ireland. Belfast-based civil rights organisers were unaware, for example, of local marching routes during the second civil rights march on October 5, 1968 in Derry-Londonderry. It is suggested that one consequence was that the route taken may have played a role in exacerbating communal tensions (Prince and Warner, 2012). Finally, Barritt suggests that civil rights marchers could have paused their efforts after securing political reforms in November 1968 but chose to press onwards, a decision that he suggests began to alienate moderate Protestants and Nationalists (Barritt, 1982 p.8).

4.2 Phase 2: Crisis response and firefighting (1969-1972)

The period of time between 1969 and 1972 can be viewed as a period of rapid escalation of violent conflict. The dramatically changing environment saw clashes between civil rights protesters and counter-protestors, and a summer of communal upheaval in Belfast and Derry-Londonderry that led to the arrival of British troops in August 1969. An awakened Irish Republican Army (IRA) bombing campaign, by the end of 1970 paved the way for internment without trial, controversially established

in August 1971. Rather than containing it, internment increased the violence (McKittrick and McVea, 2013).

Recruiting for paramilitarism increased in tandem with the heightened intensity of the armed campaign. Bombs planted by the IRA in mainly Protestant communities- two pubs on the Shankill Road, a British Legion Hall in the small enclave of Suffolk in west Belfast, and along early morning marching routes on the twelfth of July were perceived as the specific targeting of Protestants. As a result, recruitment increased for Loyalist paramilitaries; by the end of August 1971, local defence associations came together under a central council known as the Ulster Defence Association (UDA) (Hall, 1988: p 28). The growth of Loyalist paramilitarism was also accompanied by increasingly violent rhetoric and actions of extremists within Unionism. At a "monster" rally (Hall, 1988 p.33) of the militant Unionist movement the Ulster Vanguard attended by 50,000 people in late 1971, its leader the former minister for home affairs William Craig is quoted as saying:

> "We must build up a dossier of the men and women who are a menace to this country, because if and when the politicians fail us, it may be our job to liquidate the enemy" (ibid).

1972 arrived ominously with the killing of unarmed civil rights marchers (known as Bloody Sunday) in Derry-Londonderry and within three months Stormont was prorogued. The culmination of such events was to mark this as a context-shifting year. It would notoriously also be known as the most violent year of the Troubles with 500 killings, 10,000 shootings, 2000 explosions and 5000 injured (McKittrick and McVea, 2013).

As the pace of violent communal conflict accelerated, Catholic and Protestant communities faced intimidation and displacement. Previously 'mixed' neighbourhoods became increasingly physically and geographically polarised. The degree of the rapid displacement is well captured by Murtagh:

> "[T]he biggest period of segregation in Belfast was between 1969 and 1974 when it is estimated that some 60,000 people left their home as a result of

> the violence. That period and the massive movement and sorting of population back into already established ethnic space was, until the outbreak of the Yugoslavian conflict, the biggest mass movement of civilian population since the war in Europe" (Murtagh quoted in Hall, 1998 p. 4).

Practical peacebuilding activities in this volatile period reflected reactive, crisis response and fire-fighting approaches. Local peace activists, trade unionists, and clergy sought to stem these dangerous and polarising trends by attempting to maintain cohesion in mixed areas, and to de-escalate violence in their own locales, workplaces and domains. Particularly impacted by violence in the everyday lives of families and communities, women also became visible activists (Hammond Callaghan, 2006; 2007). Such efforts were at times fraught with difficulties and came at a personal cost.

Responding to the experience of living in crisis

The development of peace committees began in the summer of 1969 after communal violence began to escalate throughout flashpoint areas during the summer marching season. Formed to de-escalate potential rioting and protect homes, Bleakley (1972) describes that peace committees operated a 24-hour service out of church halls and were equipped with a telephone line to receive calls by anyone needing assistance, with instructions to 'dial 58507 for peace'. Peace committees attempted to "saturate the area with peace patrols," and focused on dispelling rumours of violence between areas in order to prevent intercommunal violence (Bleakley, 1972 p.93). Wearing distinctive white armbands, members of the patrol went for walks in teams between the hours of 7:30pm and 1:30am. If there was local disturbance the committee took action to calm the riots. In some cases they formed a human chain around those in danger, or by using clergy to negotiate and de-escalate tensions. According to Bleakley, peace bulletins were used to spread a sense of unity and pride to discourage local rioting (ibid, p. 94). Writing about the containment of rioting in Belfast in August 1969, Liam Kelly (2009; 2011) attributes some success to peace committees, which he states, in certain areas, mitigated localised rioting. Peace committees, he writes, were

particularly effective in areas of Belfast where members of the committee had formed good relationships with the local police (ibid). By the end of 1969 there were a number of peace committees that remained in operation, but Bleakley writes that the height of their activity occurred in the autumn of 1969.

Trade unions were also considered important during this phase in efforts to prevent violence on the streets from invading the workplace (Bleakley, 1972). Particular credit is given to shop stewards in the shipyard for their role in preventing incidents of intimidation against Catholic employees (Bleakley, 1972). In one particular example, on August 15, 1969 one day after an upsurge in rioting had left residents in Belfast intimidated out of their homes and led to several deaths, a mass open-air meeting of 8,000 workers was called. Describing the event as "touch and go" due to the tensions in the crowd Bleakley (1972) recalled that a turning point came when Reverend Eric Gallagher, a local Methodist minister, intervened:

> "[A] forthright Christian message [was given] which somehow or other got through to the men. It was an astonishing and moving contribution, striking the right prayer to unite them all. Those who attended the meeting agree that this was the turning point that prepared a new mood" (Bleakley, 1972 p.72).

Bleakley cites that chief shop steward, Sandy Scott, reinforced the case on pragmatic economic grounds and emphasised that nobody benefited from a disrupted workplace and destroyed industry. Management followed up producing notices displayed to warn workers that if any threats were made to other employees it would be grounds for immediate dismissal. Bleakley describes that union leadership within the Northern Committee of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU) also coordinated such efforts across the province. Writing in 1972, Bleakely acknowledged that the unions continued to be put under pressure when acting to keep workplaces free from sectarianism. Trade union activism would continue throughout the conflict in efforts to deter intimidation of workers; a tricky navigation at times when membership took more extremist positions. For example, during the spring of 1971, when 4000 shipyard workers backed politicians calling for internment (Hall, 1988 pp. 25-27), and in 1974 when a strike organised by the Ulster

Worker's Council organised Protestant workers to bring down the first power-sharing government. Finally, creating sectarian-free workplaces was also challenging as some types of employment (i.e. working for the British Government or military bodies) became considered as legitimate targets by the Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA).

Maintaining relationships and social cohesion within a fraying social fabric was another area of concern and practical activity. The Good Neighbour Campaign began in 1972 by those who had been involved several years earlier in the east Belfast peace committees. Disturbed by seeing the mass relocation taking place across the city as residents moved out of mixed areas into single identity communities, the campaign urged citizens to build good relationships and give assurances to those who were fearful. Barritt (1982) writes that over a period of some three years, 10,000 signatures were collected. While the initiative seems to have been short-lived, those involved remained active through the work of another group formed out of the same campaign- the East Belfast Community Council- known since 1996 as the East Belfast Community Development Agency.

Growing peace networks became particularly important in the unfolding context of conflict, polarisation and militarism. Barritt recalls that groups worked together, for example, in circulating peace petitions and organising peace rallies, describing that an early peace rally in the Ormeau Park in 1971 had attracted between 8,000-10,000 attendees (Barritt, 1982). However, by contrast, as mentioned previously the Ulster Vanguard a militant and extremist Unionist group attracted over 50,000 people to the same location six months later. By 1974, peace groups had formed an umbrella group known as the Peace Forum in order to coordinate and maximise their collective efforts. The Peace Forum represented a wide approach, united by a desire to stop violence but not necessarily united in pacifism (Barritt, 1982 p.115). Over subsequent years this group used the network for conferences, consultation, for visits to the Northern Ireland Office, and to meet with the army and police in order to give input on relevant issues.

Women, a constituency highly impacted in their everyday lives by the escalating violent conflict, also became peace activists within their own communities as well as within efforts to bolster inter-communal relationships (Hammond Callaghan, 2002, 2006). Distressed by the escalating sectarian violence which caused Catholic neighbours to leave her area, Ruth Agnew, a retired cleaner, felt women had a unique role and needed to speak out against the violence. Speaking at an event sponsored by another peace group, PACE, Agnew is paraphrased as saying, that what was needed was "not discussions in a college but to get the women together… women who lived in the riot areas and knew at first hand what violence meant" (Barritt, 1982 p.104). From this event Women Together (WT) (1970 to 2001) was formed. Their approach was to meet informally, placing emphasis on getting to know one another, arranging respite holidays for those most affected, and running playgroups. At times this also involved taking direct action when violence erupted in their area by forming a human shield to stop attacks on people or property. According to Barritt (1982) by 1977 there were seven WT groups in Belfast and two more in Lisburn and Whitehead. While clearly there was motivation to meet together to build relationships, Hammond Callaghan (2006) offers a critique that women involved with WT avoided discussing controversial topics, for example, internment. However, the critique is followed by an acknowledgement that given the mixed nature of the group, such topics may have jeopardised intra-communal solidarity.

Women living in Nationalist areas highly impacted by violence between armed groups and police and army were likewise involved in anti-violence protests during this phase (Hammond Callaghan, 2002). Two incidents in particular set off efforts to mobilise peace activism. The first incident, in early April, was the death of Martha Crawford, a mother-of-ten living in west Belfast- killed in the crossfire of shooting between the PIRA and the army. Over the next several weeks local women began circulating anti-violence petitions. Speaking to the media, they called for the leader of the PIRA Seán MacStíofáin to move his family to their area rather than make decisions from the safety of Dublin, where he was based. Peace petitions circulated over the next several months had, by June 1972, received thousands of signatures.

Martha Crawford's death was followed by an incident in Derry-Londonderry in May, when an off-duty army officer Ranger William Best, was killed by the Official Irish Republican Army. Best, a Catholic and a native of the Nationalist area of Creggan had been killed while home on leave to visit his family (Hammond Callaghan, 2002). Appalled that the paramilitaries would target a local boy home to see his mother, 200 women marched to the headquarters of the Official Irish Republican Army (OIRA) to protest (Hall, 1988). Hammond Callaghan, described their motives as:

> "[A] maternal response as well as a nationalist response to Best's death; a contradiction of the Official IRA's claim to represent them in killing Best; and an overall opposition to IRA offensive military strategies" (Hammond Callaghan, 2002 p.39).

The Irish News reported at the time that several days later a rally organized by the women in Creggan drew 1000 supporters demanding that the OIRA leave the area (Irish News, 1972b). By the end of May, three weeks after Ranger Best was killed, the OIRA had called a ceasefire. Bowyer Bell (1993) views the ceasefire as largely a by-product of splits in Republican ideology but considers these actions may have also been of some influence. This group, which became known as Derry Women for Peace (DWP), in early June, also held meetings with the PIRA (as did moderate Nationalists John Hume and Paddy Devlin) and the Secretary of State William Whitelaw. Hammond Callaghan cites that Hume later told the women their efforts had opened the door for him to begin conversations with Whitelaw. She also contends that these efforts may have had some influence on the PIRA's decision to announce a ceasefire (albeit short-lived) in June. The DWP worked together until the late 1970s, and during this time undertook a number of activities, for example the group:

> "[M]et regularly in each other's homes, organised a peace petition, attended local community meetings, liaised with other peace groups in Belfast such as Women Together for Peace….negotiated with the RUC for the release of internees, prevented further arrests, and lobbied a host of political agents in the conflict, from the Provisional IRA leaders, the RUC, and British military officials to representatives from British, Northern Irish and Southern Irish (Republic) governments" (Hammond Callaghan, 2002 p.42).

While the DWP worked together until the late 1970s on anti-violence efforts, they often were the targets of criticism from within their own community (Hammond Callaghan, 2002). As Kilmurray (2016) explains, in a context of high polarisation, there was an increased pressure to maintain intra-communal solidarity:

> "For those activists resident in single identity communities certain levels of dissent were acceptable provided it did not stray into areas where it could be exploited by 'outsiders. When this happened the reaction was often punitive, as experienced by the 'Peace Women' in Derry, who were attacked due to their outspoken opposition to violence" (Kilmurray, 2016 p.141).

While Kilmurray is speaking of the DWP, an incident in west Belfast draws a similar illustration. During a peace meeting initiated by local women after mother-of-ten Martha Crawford was killed in April of 1972, local Republican activists disrupted proceedings. Their protest was in part, a reaction against the presence of members of Women Together (WT) who had learned of the incident and had come to the meeting in support. Letters to the editor of the Irish News shortly afterwards reveal some of the tensions. The first letter by a local woman criticised Women Together for a lack of condemnation of state-base violence, stating that everyone wants peace, but peace with justice. The second letter, written by the local west Belfast organisers of the original meeting calling themselves "Peace within the Community Group" (Irish News, 1972a p. 4), then proceeded to dissociate themselves from Women Together explaining that WT had arrived uninvited to the gathering. They maintained that the meeting had been organised by those impacted by the death of their friend Martha Crawford, and merely wished to "do something" (ibid). The fact that the peace organisers felt the need to write to the paper to explain reflects the difficult balance of maintaining intra-communal relationships in a context where one's families and neighbours are both victims and perpetrators of violence; the space for intra-communal dissent begins to shrink.

One final peacebuilding initiative to highlight during this phase, similar to others, had its genesis in violence. In July 1972, after a short-lived ceasefire had broken down the PIRA stepped up its campaign by planting 15 bombs in Belfast in what

became known as Bloody Friday. Nine people were killed and 130 people injured as bomb warnings came in too late, were not acted upon at all, or served to only shift people from one danger spot to another (Bowyer Bell, 1993). Two months later, in September 1972 Reverend Joe Parker, a Church of Ireland minister who had lost his only son as a result of a bomb on Bloody Friday, began a fast in front of City Hall. Frustrated by the continuing violence, Parker, invited others to join him and become a witness for peace (Barritt, 1982). These efforts expanded to include circulating petitions, printing bumper stickers and badges and to create a visible sign of the human cost- by planting white crosses in the front of Belfast City Hall- one for each person who had died in the Troubles. A relatively short-lived effort, Reverend Parker moved to Canada in 1975, discouraged by the continuing violence and a decreasing support for peace. Fitzduff and Williams (2007) acknowledge the ephemeral nature of such actions but nonetheless reflected it was an important and visible witness to the human consequence of violence: "…Joseph Parker's placing of crosses…touched a human note about how humans treat each other" (Fitzduff and Williams, 2007 p. 35).

Conclusion

Reflecting on this second phase of peacebuilding in this particularly volatile period, several points can be made about the practical wisdom or phronesis demonstrated by interventions. Firstly, much of the activity was crisis responsive and reactive, and borne of tragedy- neighbours intimidated out of a shared neighbourhood, or the death of a child or a mother. In this increasingly polarised and rapidly changing context, fight or flight instincts may reflect a sense of urgency- an emotional gut response to 'do something.' Initiatives such as peace committees sent out to patrol tense neighbourhoods was viewed later as useful in particular localised situations to halt the momentum of violence, and according to Kelly, their presence explains variances in communal rioting in the summer of 1969 (Kelly, 2009; 2011). Importantly, he notes that those committees that were most effective knew their local context, and had built up strong relationships. In this, and other examples such as within the unions, key people in leadership such as clergy and shop stewards in

each context had credibility and were used as a moral authority to de-escalate potential problems on the streets and workplaces.

Efforts to maintain social cohesion in such a polarised context suggest a gradual orientation towards informal activities rather than public events such as rallies. Practical approaches, taken by groups like Women Together or DWP meeting together over cups of tea, organising respite breaks and supporting those in areas most impacted had a longer life span than petition-signing or even rallies for peace. Given the increasing militarised context, lower-profile activity was presumably safer. It may have also served to normalise meeting together in a context where such activities were increasingly becoming more dangerous and abnormal.

A critique that mixed groups did not bring up controversial topics like internment may also be evidence of phronesis given a polarised atmosphere. For groups trying to maintain cohesion, talking about topics that would be considered controversial might be counter-productive. The rapidly changing context also impacted inter-communal relationships as intra-communal loyalty became prioritised. As polarisation increased, women involved in anti-violence peace efforts from within the Nationalist community found their efforts created a backlash from their own community. This backlash exposed both the contested nature of 'peace,' and that those who may dissent from the predominant community definition of 'peace' came at a cost.

4.3 Phase 3: Holding societal threads together (1973-1979)

Direct rule, according to Cochrane and Dunn (2002), left a democratic deficit that was significantly important to the development of the breadth and width of community and civil society's more formalised involvement in peacebuilding and in the formation of a community and voluntary sector. Political efforts at the time became stalled - initially by a coordinated effort by Loyalist workers who successfully collapsed a short-lived power-sharing executive in 1974, and again in 1975, when the Constitutional Convention was wound up after six months with no

agreement. Civil society and community level activists began to organise on behalf of themselves. In an effort to support social and political problem solving and to keep society stitched together, this phase of peacebuilding found civil society: forging networks, engaging in political intermediation with armed combatants, and establishing community development as a tool of engagement. Finally, in an emotional response to a particularly tragic episode that led to the deaths of three children, the Peace People movement rallied the public to mass mobilisation to promote a philosophy of non-violence.

Responding out of instinct

In December 1974, roughly seven months after the collapse of the short-lived Sunningdale power-sharing government, a group of clergy arranged a secret meeting with members of the PIRA in Feakle, County Clare. These talks established a line of communication between PIRA and the British government through a group of senior Protestant clergy (Brewer et al., 2011). It is noteworthy that one of the clergy involved in the secret meeting was the same minister who had spoken to shipyard workers in the summer of 1969 - the Methodist minister Reverend Eric Gallagher, a man whose name reappears regularly in subsequent years in multiple types of peacebuilding activities. Describing the secret meeting as an initiative that was highly risky at that time, Brewer et al, record that it met with some limited success and suggest it led to a six-month ceasefire. Once the meeting became publicly known, the clergy who had attended came under heavy criticism and received abusive phone calls and death threats (ibid, p.196). Such was the level of threat issued that it was “many years before Protestant clergy met the IRA again in systematic dialogue, although casual contacts were kept” (ibid).

Intermediation efforts were also the focus of Quaker activity (the Religious Society of Friends) who, although Protestant, were generally viewed as neutral (Bass, 2009). As early as 1972, intermediation efforts paved a path that eventually led in later years to the Belfast based conciliation project known as Quaker House. Financially supported by Quakers in Great Britain and on the island of Ireland,

Quaker House became a neutral venue where key players in the conflict could meet privately, share a meal and listen to opposing views in order to widen their contacts. Purposely taking no position on the constitutional issue, instead the aim was to be "responsive to the political and community events" (Bennett, 2009 pp.91-92). Over a time period of 25 years Quaker House was led by a sequence of volunteer hosts, often married couples, who volunteered to act as intermediaries. Six teams of hosts over the years progressively built upon relationships established by their predecessors (ibid).

According to Bennett several key accomplishments of Quaker House in the early years were to establish trust with: politicians, paramilitary groups, prisoners, peace groups, church representatives, and cross-community groups. Bennett writes that "as relationships evolved, individual politicians, paramilitary leaders came regularly to Quaker House to talk about the situation, clarify their thinking and explore the views of others" (ibid p.94). Over decades, Quaker House would remain involved as a conduit working between local political parties within Northern Ireland, between paramilitaries, and unofficially between Unionists and Dublin politicians. Having a conduit for information sharing became particularly useful in the late 1980s after the signing of the Anglo-Irish Agreement, when the 'official' position taken by Unionist parties was to oppose the Agreement. In a context where there was little direct contact between local politicians of opposing parties and no official communication protocols, Quaker House representatives helped politicians build insight into other parties' political thinking, build networks, and widen communication.

With local political level leaders absent during this phase, the development of community leadership and community empowerment also became important (Cochrane and Dunn, 2002). Cochrane and Dunn argue that the combination of the democratic deficit and economic deprivation within Catholic and Protestant working-class areas led to an increased politicisation around socio-economic issues (ibid). Self-help and empowerment were concepts familiar to Nationalist communities who had, years earlier, developed a tradition of self-help in response

to the inequalities of the Stormont regime. Nationalists “had never looked to it [Stormont] for political or social leadership, [they had] consequently developed a tradition of community activism and self-help (Cochrane and Dunn, 2002 p.63). The same authors suggest that Protestant and Loyalist communities viewed that they, by contrast, had to play catch-up.

Community development approaches had been introduced years earlier by the Community Relations Commission - a body set up in 1969 by the local government prior to direct rule. The early aim from the commission had been to use community development to reach out to alienated communities, redress previous state neglect and build confidence that grievances were being heard (Robson, 2000). Maurice Hayes, the first Commissioner, had been highly influenced by a visit to the US where he saw the approach being undertaken with communities as part of Johnson’s ‘war on poverty’ in the aftermath of violence in the black community (Robson, 2000; Morrow 2013; Rolston, 1980). Consequently, his view was that community development might be considered a first step towards building up intra-communal confidence and as a prelude towards ultimately building better cross-community relations. As violence escalated rapidly in the early 1970s, the commission, through its community development officers (CDOs), became actively involved in providing assistance to grassroots communities experiencing intimidation or who were unable to get access from statutory services as a result of widespread street turmoil. The early work of the Commission, however, was viewed with suspicion. Among Unionists it was viewed as a “form of impunity for rioting nationalists” (Robson, 2000 p.143), while Nationalists viewed it as a Trojan horse for the British government (Morrow, 2013). The Commission closed in 1975 during the Sunningdale phase of power sharing, viewed by politicians as no longer necessary in a power-sharing context although Robson suggests there was concern it was becoming too independent (Robson 2000; Bass, 2009). Interestingly, three of the original CDOs (Derick Wilson, Joe Camplisson, and Niall Fitzduff) would continue in future years to remain significantly involved in forms of peacebuilding. Wilson as co-founder of peacebuilding research think-tank Future Ways, Camplisson leading a conflict transformation project Moldovan Initiative Committee of Management

(MICOM) with work based in Northern Ireland and Moldova, and Fitzduff as the founder of Rural Community Network, an important regional community development NGO.

One example of a model of community development emerging in this phase was the Centre for Neighbourhood Development (1975-1992) an organisation begun in response to the Community Relations Commission being wound up. Two individual CDOs from the Community Relations Commission from a Quaker background were interested in continuing the community development work which the Commission had started. Together with other Quakers and representatives from different areas of Belfast, they began to meet together to plan the project (Bass, 2009 pp.65-67). An organisational strength of the Centre for Neighbourhood Development was that it took both a local and centralised approach (Kilmurray, 2016 p.132). Community development workers were employed from Catholic and Protestant communities within six primarily interface areas of Belfast, but all shared a central office. Important to its efficacy and relevancy was that employees were recruited from the local neighbourhood with the view that those living there were best placed to understand the pertinent issues (ibid). Supported financially initially by Quakers, Quaker practices influenced the formation of the organisation (Bass, 2009 p.63). For example, all decisions were made by consensus and a flat pay structure was adopted for all staff. Kilmurray and Bass both highlight names of particular staff who were important to organisational success due to the personal relationships they had built in the local area for which they were responsible. While the organisation was wound up in 1992, Kilmurray writes that as a model of practice, its use of a neighbourhood worker was widely regarded as successful and subsequently adopted by Belfast City Council (Kilmurray, 2016 p.135).

Finally, it was during this phase that one of the local peace initiatives most well-known internationally began. While public demonstrations and rallies used to protest direct violence and promote peace had not typically gathered large crowds, efforts initiated by the Peace People by the latter part of the 1970s enjoyed much larger numbers with greater public participation, albeit for a short-lived period of

time. Arguably one of the better known and documented grassroots efforts to promote non-violent conflict resolution, efforts attracted high numbers during its first several months of rallies followed just over a year later by being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. Similar to Witness for Peace, Peace People initiatives were born out of an experience of tragedy. In August 1976, a mother and her three children were hit by a car that had been stolen by an PIRA volunteer. The three children were killed after the car's driver was shot as he was chased by the Army, which then crashed into the family. Fairmichael (1987) notes that the PIRA was primarily blamed for the death of the children in the incident, although it had been the British Army who shot the driver. A few days after the incident, a witness to the car crash, Betty Williams, knocked on doors to petition the public to condemn the violence. The children's aunt, Mairead Corrigan also made a public appeal for non-violence- and shortly afterwards the two joined together in support. Over the next several months a series of rallies and marches were held across the province. Numbers were higher than at previous periods, with the first march attracting 50,000 or more at Ormeau Park (McKeown, 1984 p.147). Subsequent marches held in symbolic locales such as the Shankill Road saw 25,000-35,000 people marching and at the Falls Road march numbers were estimated at 10,000 people (Fairmichael, 1987).

By October 1977 it was announced that Betty Williams and Mairead Corrigan would receive the Nobel Peace Prize for their efforts, which ironically marked the beginning of the end of the mass rallies staged by the organisation. Heightened by great media attention, support for the group began to wane and rumours and complaints circulated over too many overseas trips, personality clashes, and where the Nobel money was being spent (Fairmichael, 1987; Bowyer Bell, 1993; Barritt, 1982). Furthermore, splits began to surface when attempts were made to move beyond generic anti-violence efforts towards taking stands on matters of security policy such as Emergency Powers Act and the use of Diplock courts (Fairmichael, 1987). One complaint was that the Peace People focused on the violence of paramilitaries more than state-based violence, however one profile of the organisation suggests this accusation was primarily as a result of the way the media had covered the organisation (Fairmichael, 1987 p.10). Fairmichael writes that at

the start of the movement the media emphasised their anti-paramilitarism but when the Peace People began to criticise state-based violence the media began to focus instead on the internal dissent within the organisation (ibid). Fairmichael concludes that splits were the result of a lack of clarity about what peace meant also noting that the philosophy of nonviolence was not a unifying concept in and of itself as most of the membership would not have held a strong pacifist conviction (Fairmichael, 1987). While officially the originating members of the Peace People split in 1980, the organisation remained active in lower profile project work led by Mairead Maguire.

Though the Peace People were regarded as making little influence on conflict cessation, one impact was a proliferation of other peace groups, which cumulatively added to the peacebuilding constituency (Fairmichael, 1987). For example, in the early 1980s former members of the Peace People became active in founding several new organisations: the Committee on the Administration of Justice (CAJ) a prominent human rights organisation; Kilcranny House, a residentially-based farm and rural education centre; and the Peace and Reconciliation Group (PRG) who were re-constituted by those involved with the local Derry-Londonderry based-affiliate of the Peace People. Similarly, in the late 1980s early support for mediation and negotiation were generated when Peace People affiliated members became involved with the first mediation organisation, the Northern Ireland Conflict Mediation Association (now Mediation Northern Ireland). Interestingly, though making no direct correlation, McKittrick and McVea conclude a discussion of this timeframe with recognition that violence dropped after this phase and describing it as the end of the most violent stage of the Troubles (McKittrick and McVea, 2012).

Conclusion

During this phase of peacebuilding the context of a democratic deficit enabled members of civil society to step forward (Cochrane and Dunn, 2002; Barritt, 1982). Evident were examples whereby local clergy (Feakle talks) and Quakers stepped

into roles of leadership as intermediaries - the former trusted due to their status and the latter due to perceived neutrality. It is striking that Eric Gallagher again is mentioned as playing a role in the behind-the-scenes negotiations at Feakle, perceived as a credible conduit. This suggests that in part, he had credibility and was selected as an intermediary due to his previous experiences and networks of key relationships.

The importance of understanding the nuances of a given localised context of conflict also surfaces in the work of those initiating community development. In examples taken both from the Community Relations Commission and the Centre for Neighbourhood Development a localised approach was considered key to its success. Its importance presumably linked to Barritt's comment that:

> "The effect of violence in Northern Ireland on each individual depends very much on where he lives, which in turn is largely governed by who he is and by his socio-economic standing" (Barritt, 1982 p.68).

Thus, drawing individual staff from specific areas was identified as important, especially in the Centre for Neighbourhood Development - prompted by the view that locally-based staff with strong context-knowledge (phronesis), would understand and identify the most relevant issues. Literature highlights particular individuals who, because of their networks of relationships within the local context became important, for example, as conduits working between and within interface communities (Kilmurray, 2016 p.133). Finally, Fairmichael's analysis of the Peace People echoes some of the tensions in the discussion of non-violence that had surfaced during the civil rights movement, that the 'universal' (episteme) value of non-violence lacked a local contextual frame. Fairmichael highlights the absence of a shared commitment to pacifism, and views that the lack of unity on the philosophy of non-violence may have ultimately played a role in limiting the life-span of the public mass movement stage the Peace People (Fairmichael, 1987).

4.4 Phase 4: Getting on with It (1980-1991)

According to McKittrick and McVea (2012) levels of violence dropped in the late 1970s, and continued to do so over this next phase of peacebuilding. However, even if by purely quantitative measures incidents of violent deaths had decreased, iconic events made a significant impact and prompted civil society to generate new activities and take on new roles. For example, even as internment was phased out, changed security policies such as the decision made in 1975 to withdraw special category status for prisoners, and the continued use of Diplock courts and trial without jury served to increase concern and accusations of state-perpetrated human rights abuses. Changes in political status, rejected by those who considered themselves politically motivated, set into motion a series of protests within the prisons that eventually led to the hunger strikes of 1981 and the death of ten hunger-strikers. Increasingly tense prison life in this context found civil society, for example Quakers, taking on roles mediating between prison staff, prisoners and their families (Blair, 2009).

The rise in support for the PIRA and Sinn Fein as a result of the hunger strikes caused concern for both politicians in the Republic of Ireland and for Margaret Thatcher and laid the groundwork for increased communication between the two countries (McKittrick and McVea, 2012). A tangible sign of the improved relationship was the 1985 Anglo-Irish Agreement. Considered important in the history of Anglo-Irish relations, it formally established a consultative role for the Republic of Ireland within the affairs of Northern Ireland, and for this reason, was rejected by Unionist politicians and members of Protestant/Unionist/Loyalist (PUL) civil society. Rallies and 'days of action' under the rallying cry of 'Ulster Says No,' followed but without the disruption of the earlier UWC strike in the previous decade.

More than a decade into the Troubles, others in civil society began to take the long-view- 'getting on with it' to progress desired change. Tired of waiting for local political progress in the vacuum of direct rule, activists took it upon themselves to

tackle institutional segregation within education by founding the first integrated school, Lagan College, and in the latter part of the 1980s, by introducing new skills and ways to think about conflict with the introduction of mediation (Campbell, 2000). Faith leaders, frustrated at the polarisation of segregated communal living, created new ecumenical lived communities (Wells, 1999). Finally, concerned that those bereaved as a result of the Troubles had no support, groups began to organise concrete practical help for those facing trauma by working with victims of the conflict.

Learning by doing

In the early 1980s civil society activists began organising to monitor human rights. In 1975, Secretary of State Mervyn Rees had instigated several changes to security matters: internment was to be phased out by the end of 1975 and special category status for prisoners convicted of terrorism-related crimes ended. Those convicted of terrorist offences after March 1976 were thus categorised as 'criminals.' Fuelled by growing opposition to the special extra-judicial methods used by the state in its attempt to maintain security, activists concerned that civil liberties and human rights were being jeopardised called for mechanisms to monitor potential abuses. The most prominent example of this time was the Committee on the Administration of Justice (CAJ), a human rights charity that emerged in 1981 out of networks loosely affiliated with those who had been involved with the Peace People (Fairmichael, 1987 p.16). The organisation was established to advocate and monitor abuses occurring as a result of special emergency legislation which granted special powers for detaining and arresting those suspected of having committed 'terrorist' offences, or being part of armed paramilitary combatant organisations (Cochrane and Dunn, 2002). Primarily with the aid of legal skills and advocacy tools, "the main focus of the CAJ during its formation amounted to a campaign against the civil liberties and human rights abuses inherent in the existing emergency provisions legislation (Cochrane and Dunn, 2002 p.30). CAJ's role in the context of the time it was founded suggests several noteworthy points about civil society peacebuilding. Against the context of the PIRA armed campaign, it could be argued that it was

important that legal redress was viewed as an effective tool to challenge human rights abuses or institutionalised discriminatory practices perpetrated by the state. This demonstrated the efficacy of non-violent mechanisms such as the law for redressing political and structural injustices. Furthermore, by adopting a watchdog function to track such abuses another level of democratic accountability was created. Finally, these efforts also consolidated the importance of human rights as a central tenet in building a peaceful society - concepts that would eventually also feature in the content of the Good Friday Agreement.

The recommendation for the removal of political status for incoming prisoners in 1976 was particularly controversial. Many prisoners viewed themselves not as criminals but as fighting a war, and thus politically motivated. Unsurprisingly, the policy decision was met with opposition, with prisoners refusing to wear uniforms in the 'blanket' protests and latterly a 'dirty protest,' so named for the refusal to slop out (Barritt, 1982). To add pressure, Republican prisoners shifted tactics and a hunger strike led to the death of Bobby Sands in May 1981 followed by the deaths of nine fellow Republican hunger-strikers (ibid). These deaths generated both sympathy and recruits to Republicanism, fuelling animosities aimed at the British (McKittrick and McVea, 2012). Views of Thatcher as inflexible and 'iron-fisted' on the issue of political status ultimately generated a bevy of radicalised new recruits for the IRA:

> "The hungerstrikes had lasting effects, most of which were bad for the authorities and for almost everyone apart from the republican movement. For one thing, the extended trauma of the months of confrontation seared deep into the psyches of large numbers of people, stirring many troubling emotions. Community divisions had always been deep, but now they had a new rawness" (McKittrick and McVea, 2012 p.170).

In the context of a 'new rawness,' Quakers, who have historically worked for improved welfare in prisons, found an increased need to offer support to prisoners and their families. Quaker involvement in the prisons began in 1971 in response to internment. A request was made to the Ministry of Home Affairs to be allowed to set up a visitors' centre at the Maze/Long Kesh to support families who had interned relatives. At the start this consisted of a canteen, but by 1975 included a

minibus service, an advice centre, and a children's playgroup for families visiting the prison. By 1982 the visitors' centre at the Maze was running six days a week and became an integral part of the strategy of Quaker peacebuilding.

The practical Quaker presence in the prisons was key to eventually gaining trust with both families and prison officials and, in time, allowed them to share concerns over areas needing improvements such as access to prisoners and services for visitors (Blair, 2009). While the advice centres, café and playgroup for children were recognised as innovative at the time, just as importantly, this practical activity helped to forge relationships. During the years of the 'blanket protest' and hunger strikes, this would prove even more important as relationships within the prison broke down. Blair (2009) recounts that visitor centre organiser Martie Rafferty was particularly successful in developing a network between prison staff and prisoners that allowed her to advocate for improvements to prison welfare policy. During this time she built up contacts with key Loyalist and Republican prisoners, and was able to relay concerns held by the prisoners to officials that they felt were not being addressed. Rafferty's role as an interlocutor is also profiled in Shirlow and McEvoy's (2008) discussion of the formation of early prisoner groups. They describe early efforts as "groundbreaking" and highlight that Rafferty played a key role in helping develop relationships between the two groups (Shirlow and McEvoy, 2008 pp.64-68).

In addition to their role in prisons, Quaker civil society activists also supported peace education initiatives, for example, by joining with others to support the founding of Lagan College. Recognising that separate schooling of children contributed to communal divisions, several voluntary grassroots-based efforts were begun in the early 1980s to improve links between communities through education. All Children Together (ACT), a group comprised of parents who had lobbied government since 1974 to provide joint integrated educational for children, was finally successful getting such provision passed into law in 1978. Frustrated by the subsequent lack of governmental action, several members of ACT raised their own funds to start Lagan College.

In addition to integrated education, civil society groups had an interest in promoting a peace education curriculum within the predominately divided education system. The adoption of a new policy education curriculum Education for Mutual Understanding (EMU) saw Quakers collaborating with the University of Ulster, (now Ulster University) and the Centre for Study of Conflict to run an action-research project known as the Quaker Peace Education Project (QPEP). Spearheaded by Jerry Tyrrell, QPEP, amongst other accomplishments, introduced school-based peer mediation into Northern Ireland. Mediation, a new import at the time, was received with mixed response upon its arrival to Northern Ireland. Jerry Tyrrell wrote on the initial resistance to this American import:

> "Fresh back from the USA, I enthused about this particular mediation training course, and was met with polite interest, but a definite impression that I had attempted to teach my granny to suck eggs, and yet simultaneously introduce something that was peculiar to America and not worthy of import" (Tyrell, 1988 p.4).

Tyrell's experience selling mediation locally was echoed by others involved in peacebuilding. Campbell, one of the first to be officially trained on the island, wrote of both his discomfort and opportunity this American import created (Campbell, 2000). The first mediation training, aimed at local youth workers and peace activists, came after American Mennonite mediator Ron Kraybill received a joint invitation from Pax Christi (a Catholic Peace organisation) and a small group of Dublin-based Mennonites (Campbell, 2000 p.98). Reflecting on those early days of mediation, Campbell writes that while the ideas generated enthusiasm, several issues surfaced during implementation. The model and materials were viewed as overly American and rested on the assumption that local disputants would want to sit down face-to-face stating, "Irish people find it difficult to speak with and face directly those with whom they disagree" (ibid p.100).

Despite the challenges, training attendees agreed to form a network to support the development of mediation skills across the region. This network formalised as the Northern Ireland Conflict Mediation Association (NICMA) in 1986. Early years of the

development of mediation was significantly supported by American Mennonites. For example, in 1987, Kraybill's colleague Barry Hart, also a Mennonite mediator, came for a year to build local capacity by training other trainers as well as the Probation Board of Northern Ireland (Sampson, 2000 p.263). The aim of the Mediation Network was to spread the newly acquired mediation skills to address conflict more positively across five special interest areas: neighbourhood work, cross cultural development, family work, international relations, and education. The seeds of this initiative became formalised in 1990 when the first local mediation NGO, the Mediation Network for Northern was established, now known as Mediation Northern Ireland.

Mediation over the years has become more widespread and in some cases formally mainstreamed into statutory bodies such as the housing authority to handle neighbourhood disputes, within family law to handle divorce and separation, and as mentioned, in schools in the form of peer mediation. It has also been used more substantially with issues of contentious parading. For example, in 1995 sixteen hours of mediation led to a short-lived negotiated accommodation over Drumcree in Portadown (Campbell, 2000 p.102) and in subsequent years between local communities such as the Holy Cross and Cluan Place disputes in the early 2000s. Reflecting on the introduction of mediation at the time it was introduced, it is clear that it was viewed as a new and fresh approach in a context of growing conflict fatigue. Campbell writes: "[M]ediation was taking root in Northern Ireland within a community that was experiencing some horrendously violent acts. Here was a sign of hope, a new way of resolving conflict taking root, not by 'flight or fight but by insight' "(ibid).

The growing conflict fatigue of relentless violence also set a backdrop against which three ecumenical residential lived communities were founded, each within several years of each other. Two of the ecumenical communities were based in Belfast and both began in 1983 - Cornerstone situated on the peace line interface on the Springfield Road in West Belfast, and the Columbanus Community in North Belfast. Cornerstone was begun by those involved in an ecumenical prayer group that had

regularly met together in Clonard Monastery since 1978. Cornerstone was intentionally set up on the interface in West Belfast as symbol of a "[D]eep desire to break down those insidious walls of sectarianism, born in the mind and heart, and still physically expressed by the many so called 'Peace Walls' throughout the city of Belfast and particularly prominent on the Springfield Road" (The Community of the Cross of Nails, 2014). Activities of the community over the years included dialogue groups, seniors luncheon clubs, after school-clubs, and as a space for sensitive discussion. For example, Garland profiles that ex-Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) commander Gusty Spence on regular occasions met local priests and John Hume at Cornerstone as part of emerging Loyalist dialogue processes prior to the ceasefires (Garland, 2001 pp.272-274). Cornerstone closed in the spring of 2012 after almost 30 years of shared residential community witness on the peace line citing its accomplishments over the years as:

> "Having an open house and a safe space for sensitive and difficult conversations to take place between Churches, political opponents, ex paramilitaries and ex prisoners from both sides, the Orange Order and the local residents, became an often hidden but important contribution to the peace process. The house also provided a comfortable place for visitors to stay, as well as a listening ear for local people, many of whom were themselves victims of the 'Troubles' and had a story to tell" (ibid).

Similarly, Columbanus, another lived community was set up in 1983 in North Belfast by Father Michael Hurley, a Jesuit priest. Hurley, a scholar of ecumenism and the founder and director of the Irish School of Ecumenics, successfully recruited a religiously mixed group of people to live together in order to challenge the prevailing norm. Instead he hoped to create a model to "challenge the prevalent sectarianism, injustice, and violence in Northern Ireland society simply by having men and women from different Christian traditions living together in simplicity and peace" (Wells, 1999 p.108). In addition to the symbolism of living together and managing a household together as a community, members prayed together and volunteered their time outside the community with peace groups, the Travelling community, ministry with prisoners, and work in schools.

At the first joint service of Columbanus held on November 23, 1983 attended by inter-faith leaders Cardinal Tomás O'Fiaich, Reverend Ken Newell, and David Bleakley of the Irish Council of Churches, Cardinal O'Fiaich is reported to have reminded the group that their commitment was unusual in the current context. Days earlier the Irish National Liberation Army (INLA) had attacked a Pentecostal church in a rural farming community in Darkley in South Armagh during worship and had killed three people. Darkley was a significant incident and such efforts to model a contrast were deemed important, as O'Fiaich's comments at the time suggest:

> "At a time when some people are saying, 'you can no longer trust your Catholic neighbor (or your Protestant neighbor, as they case may be,)' this noble and self-sacrificing group of trusting people have such confidence in each other in the power of God to unite that they are moving in to live with each other" (Wells, 1999 p.108).

Similar to other ecumenical communities, members felt that modelling a different reality than was the pervasive norm at the time was a testimony to live out their faith and as call for reconciliation. Columbanus remained a lived ecumenical community until the early 2000s.

Lastly, the Columba Community based in Derry-Londonderry was by formed in 1981 by Father Neal Carlin. Seeking to use common tenets within Christianity for reconciliation and to address areas of practical concern, the Columba Community's aim was to:

> "[R]everse the traditionally divisive role of religion in Northern Ireland. Instead of focusing on the differences in religion between Protestants and Catholics, its leaders focused on their similarities and used those teachings to address real community issues" (Kelleher and Johnson, 2008 p.160).

Initial activities included the creation of a counselling service for those experiencing trauma as a result of the Troubles, repentance services to promote acknowledgement of mutual harms, and to pray for healing and forgiveness. For example, a repentance service held on Good Friday in 1985 included members from all main churches. They carried a cross from the Columba house to the Guildhall in Derry-Londonderry and in front of a public audience of 400 heard 'confession of sin'

from Catholic, Protestant and British representatives. Forgiveness was asked for the sins of the communities they represented; Protestants asked for forgiveness for gerrymandering practices of local government and the misuse of the democratic process. Catholics confessed their glorification of violence and aspiration for a united Ireland that became idolatrous, and British representatives 'confessed' the sins of neglect and ignorance of governmental and employment based discrimination (ibid). Columba continues its work into the present. In addition to reconciliation, there is now an expanded focus to include outreach, youth work, education and issues of addiction. While the activism of ecumenical communities may be viewed at times as symbolic, the importance of such symbolism needs to be set within its own context. Committing to inter-faith cohesion through sharing a home, or public acknowledgment of a confession of culpability for historic harms can all be viewed as counter-hegemonic.

While this phase of time marks a period of decreasing levels of violence, up to this point and throughout all the earlier years of intense violence, there was little support offered to those left traumatised and impacted-most of whom were civilians (Fay et al, 1999). For example, no specific statutory bodies were tasked with serving or aiding those with physical or emotional trauma. Grassroots-based voluntary groups began to emerge in the late 1970s operating on a small scale, such as the Cross Group in 1975 and Lifeline established after the La Mon hotel bombing in 1978 (Fairmichael, 1987). Academics suggest that as late as 1999 it was the voluntary sector that acted as the major service provider for victims of Troubles related trauma (Fay et al, 1999). Early grassroots organisations such as WAVE (originally known as Widows Against Violence Empower) Trauma Centre, begun in 1991, became involved in befriending, providing counselling and practical welfare advice (Fay et al, 1999 p.206). The Good Friday Agreement would solidify the importance of victims, mandating a commitment to acknowledge and address victims. While spearheaded at the grassroots level, such support would eventually become a statutory level responsibility of the Victims and Survivors Service (VSS) and the Victims Commission (VC). Recently Victims and Survivors Service (VSS) listed 55 different organisations that were funded to carry out work specifically with

victims of the conflict (VSS, 2017) engaging in group work, respite and complementary therapy, counselling as well as advocacy for justice and truth recovery. However, much of the early work of these voluntary groups paved the way by identifying the support victims needed to help cope with both the practical and emotional impact of trauma, a need that up to that point, was left neglected and unaddressed.

Conclusion

Reflecting on this phase of peacebuilding, civil society activism demonstrated, even in small measures, a desire and a willingness to grasp the nettle of change and 'get on with it' whether by advocating for human rights, starting up the first integrated school, or by bringing new skills to deal with conflict such as mediation. Getting on with it necessitated, however, a degree of phronetic 'trial and error' and experimentation. The result was to create and model new norms that challenged, even on small scale, the hegemony of societal polarisation. For example, creating shared ecumenical communities straddling highly contested interface communities. Finally, civil society actors offered practical support for example, to victims of conflict as well as to prisoners' families. Such practical support and investment in relationships made trust tangible, and paid off in times of tension, enabling for example, Quaker staff to act as intermediaries within the prisons during the hunger-strikes.

Finally, it is useful to make a brief comparison between the importing of mediation in the late 1980s to tactics of civil rights in the late 1960s. The first observation is that while these are two different stages of conflict, one similarity is that in both cases outside knowledge, tactics and skills which might be construed as 'techniques' are sought to progress change. A seemingly banal but an important difference between the importation of mediation in the 1980s and the techniques of non-violence direct action in the late 1960s, was the training and mentoring which accompanied mediation. Such mentoring and training over time served to build

local capacity and helped those who were initially sceptical to find ways to 'indigenise' mediation in order to increase its contextual relevance.

4.5 Phase 5: Tilling the soil for political agreement (1992-1998)

Moving into its third decade of the Troubles, civil society in Northern Ireland in 1992 is described as becoming accustomed to violence with so called 'tit for tat' killings a regular feature of life. Inter-party political talks initiated by Northern Ireland Secretary of State Peter Brooke wound up without political progress in July of 1991 (McKittrick and McVea, 2012 p.330) leaving, by one observation, a sense that the "people of Northern Ireland were being reduced to mere spectators at their fate" (Pollak, 1993 p.391). Out of this context came initiatives seeking to widen and support the space for debate and to re-engage society to promote civic dialogue, facilitate the possibility of an end to armed conflict at political and community levels, and once negotiations got underway, to help encourage and consolidate political progress. Middle-range leaders (Lederach, 1997) acted as intermediators and creative innovators and were used at times to encourage both the grassroots communities and political leadership to build peace. They drew from their knowledge of their respective contexts and communities, trusted networks and learning gained from previous experiences in order to progress peace and limit violence.

Initiative '92, for example, provided a unique and unprecedented creative exercise for ordinary people to weigh-in with their own views on how the conflict might be transformed. Conversations also occurred also less publicly, built upon contacts and networks forged over previous years. For example, in Derry-Londonderry one peace organisation with established links to both the British Army and PIRA worked to promote a localised de-escalation process to scale back military operations (Lampen and Lampen, 2005; Moloney, 2002). Backchannel support between Catholic clergy and Republicans aimed to try to help secure an end to the armed campaign, and

Protestant clergy and Republican leadership met regularly in an effort to better understand respective worldviews (Brewer et al, 2011).

Conversations continued despite and amidst such tragedies as the Shankill bomb and subsequent retaliatory shootings in Greysteel. Even as both Republican and Loyalist paramilitaries moved into ceasefires in 1994 and 1995, community tensions remained high. Localised disputes over parading, particularly in interface areas, remained unresolved. This period was marked by continued tensions in the marching season; the summers between 1995 and 1997 were particularly tumultuous as stand-offs between local residents and the Orange Order in Portadown, and the Tour of the North in Belfast led to local disturbances and at times spread wider. Creative approaches mitigated localised tensions when local grassroots activists developed the idea of using a network of shared mobile phones to increase communication and dispel rumours (CDC, 1999; Jarman, 2005). Finally, as ceasefires took hold and political negotiations got underway, civil society activists continued to take steps to support political leaders by encouraging them to take risks to sit down with former enemies. Once the Good Friday Agreement was signed, civil society actors remembering mistakes of Sunningdale, worked to rally and secure popular support for a 'Yes' vote in the island-wide referendum (Guelke, 2003).

Navigating the context and learning from experience

A particularly violent two-week period in March 1988 began with the controversial killing of three alleged PIRA volunteers in Gibraltar by British SAS and followed by an attack on mourners at their funeral by loyalist Michael Stone. In the following days two off-duty British Army corporals, caught in the funeral cortege of those killed by Michael Stone, subsequently were attacked by a mob of mourners and killed. McKittrick and McVea described the period:

> "The year 1988 brought no statistical rise in violence, but it included some terrible incidents which have remained in the memory of many who lived through them…[I]n particular, in March of that year will always be

> associated with one of the darkest and most traumatic periods of the troubles, when for a time violence seemed to be spiralling completely out of control" (McKittrick and McVea, 2012 p.202).

Father Alec Reid, a member of the Redemptorist Order based at Clonard Monastery who had attended the funerals of those killed by Michael Stone, unsuccessfully attempted to stop the soldiers from being killed. He was later photographed giving last rites to one of the Army corporals, David Howes. Unbeknownst at the time, Reid was acting as a conduit and carrying a secret document of proposals to initiate talks between Sinn Fein and the Social Democratic Labour Party (SDLP) which later become a foundation to the Hume-Adams talks (Little, 2013). For years previously, priests associated with Clonard Monastery had been involved in inter-faith, reconciliation and background dialogue efforts. For example, the previously described Cornerstone Community was an outgrowth of inter-faith meetings that had been taking place at Clonard Monastery since 1978.

Reid has been described as the main architect of the behind-the-scene talks between Hume and Adams (Brewer et al, 2011 pp. 110-112). Meetings with Father Reid begun in 1987, were often held at Clonard- considered important not only for privacy, but because it implied tacit support from the church for the effort (ibid, p.112). At the same time, because they were operating 'under the radar' church officials could, if necessary, deny knowledge of involvement. Reid's network of church officials enabled necessary information to be passed, for example, to the Secretary of State Peter Brooke and the British and Irish government- a role viewed as highly significant. Under Reid's influence Albert Reynolds advocated to President Clinton to grant Adams his first Visa to the United States. As Brewer et al write: "Religious peacemakers were therefore at the centre of an extensive network, with Father Alec Reid at the hub" (ibid, p. 114). Protestant clergy were also involved in regular meetings with Republicans throughout the early 1990s, again linked through Clonard Monastery. On-going dialogue was viewed as important to create mutual sounding boards to better understand Unionist and Republican mindsets. This dialogue, over time, also enabled slowly to build relationships which according to

one Presbyterian Minister John Dunlop, became important in “creating an environment where negotiations have been possible” (ibid, p.101).

While backchannel conversations may have been on-going in private quarters, the early 1990s is portrayed as a time that in public there was a perception that little political progress was being made (Pollak, 1993). Civil society itself was characterised as paradoxically experiencing both “impotence and helplessness in the face of nearly a quarter a century political violence and deadlock” and simultaneously demonstrating “resilience of spirit and creativity” and a desire to engage in dialogue (Opsahl, 1993 p.4). The latter perhaps was a product of the former. Frustrated at the lack of progress being made in the Brooke-Mayhew inter-party talks, a local journalist Robin Wilson, and an academic from Queen’s University Simon Lee, spearheaded a plan for a ‘a citizen’s inquiry.’ Referred to as Initiative ’92, it was conceived as an independent commission which would invite submissions on ideas of the way forward - aiming to solicit views as widely as possible from across the whole of the region to ensure none were excluded. Launched in May 1992 and concluded in January 1993, the project held 29 public meetings with a range of civil society groups such as: churches, women’s groups, businesses, trade-unionists, students, youths, schools and community groups across Northern Ireland.

Pollak, the lead campaign coordinator, wrote that one of the most significant difficulties faced was the reluctance and suspicion amongst many within society at the time to submit their ideas to an unknown group of people, even one which described itself as independent. This was, in his view, due to the lack of societal trust. Republican suspicions were attributed to a history of political vetting and reluctance to sign one’s name to documents viewed as reminiscent of forced confession under police interrogation. Similarly, the commission failed to win the trust of border Protestants and was unable to gain these views, due to their belief that the commission was not adequately representative of Unionists’ perspectives (Pollak, 1993 p.393).

According to Pollak, special effort had been made to reach those who might be most reluctant with focus groups in areas such as the Shankill Road in Belfast, South Armagh, South Tyrone, rural Mid-Ulster and the Waterside area of Derry-Londonderry. Focus groups were recruited by known outreach workers and encouraged to participate by trusted local intermediaries. He wrote at the time:

> "In Northern Ireland trust between people is a great commodity. Many people, especially in the areas most affected by violence, will do something for a person or an organisation only if they personally know and trust that person or organisation" (Pollak, 1993 p. 394).

At final count by the end of the project, Initiative '92 had received 554 written submissions involving 3000 people- its results were published in the 1993, referred to as the 'Opsahl Report.' Reflecting on its importance, several scholars highlight Initiative '92 for its role in promoting a forum to house inclusive and democratic dialogue (Cochrane and Dunn, 2002 pp. 156-7) and to credit it for the introduction into the political discourse the phrase "parity of esteem"(Guelke, 2003 p.70). 'Parity of esteem' was a phrase that would be adopted into the Good Friday Agreement and subsequently also exported to other conflict regions. Finally, Guelke views that the context of the initiative was important because at that stage political talks had stalled. As a result, an achievement of the process of public debate generated by Initiative '92 was that in attempting to capture a wide breadth across society, it demonstrated that broader views and voices might help, rather than hinder political negotiations (Ibid).

In roughly the same period of the early 1990s, and much less public, local conversations began in order to try to reduce hostilities between the British Army and the PIRA. Authors describe local de-militarisation initiatives were used by the PIRA and Army to begin to reduce their military presences in Derry-Londonderry (Lampen and Lampen, 2005; Moloney, 2002). John Lampen, involved in the initiative, described that the Peace and Reconciliation Group (PRG) over a 10-year period had played an intermediary role between Nationalist communities, the RUC and the British Army (Lampen and Lampen, 2005). Initiatives originally started as an effort to improve RUC handling of complaints made by the Catholic Nationalist

community- but that over time the PRG became a trusted interlocutor. This involvement extended to regular consultations with incoming troops to offer advice on how they could patrol the city with greater sensitivity. Members of the PRG met incoming troops to provide insight into the communities they would be patrolling to help them better understand how they would be perceived. These efforts were viewed as successful with the result that "the British Army began to soften its profile in Derry" (Moloney, 2002 p.365) and is credited for changes in Army practices. For example, changes in how public complaints were received and followed up, the introduction of berets instead of helmets, and by encouraging soldiers not to use telescopic lens rifles for patrolling as it appeared too threatening to civilians. Lampen and Lampen write:

> "The local army commanders increasingly consulted the PRG, particularly the ex-paramilitaries, about operational matters. Advice was given on public order problems such as IRA funerals and political and traditional marches, and also on lesser matters such as whether people would respond better to soldiers if they wore berets rather than steel helmets and camouflage paint on their faces" (Lampen and Lampen, 2005 p.584).

Lampen and Lampen suggest that the PRG's increasingly trusted position held with the Army and the IRA allowed them to begin discussions to advocate the use of a violence reduction strategy known as GRIT (graduated reciprocation in tension-reduction) to signal intentions towards de-escalating violence. The same authors contend that the PRG subsequently negotiated a proposal in consultation with Sinn Fein, the Northern Ireland Office (NIO), the Army and RUC which included a series of moves that over time if taken by the Army and local IRA, would signal goodwill and lead to a gradual reduction of military presence. Referred to by the British Army as 'the Derry experiment', the existence of the GRIT proposal was later denied by Martin McGuinness when it was referred to publicly in the Opsahl Report in 1993 (Lampen and Lampen, 2005). According to authors this public disavowal was in part due to the fact that it was a locally based initiative and not widely known about among rank and file IRA, or at higher levels such as the Army Council (Moloney, 2002 p.371; Lampen and Lampen, 2005 p.586). As a result credibility was lost and a message was sent to the PRG that John Lampen was *persona non grata* with his

previous Republican contacts. Despite this, Moloney contends that GRIT did lead to a mutual de-escalation process in Derry-Londonderry.

> "An analysis, by the author, of operations carried out by the Derry Brigade shows that the IRA also responded to the PRG paper. Figures supplied by the IRA itself in the weekly columns of An Phoblacht-Republican News, reveal a dramatic falloff in activity in the months and years after the PRG de-escalation proposals were submitted. Between 1986 and 1989 the Derry IRA accounted for an annual average of 13 percent of all IRA operations, whereas between 1990 and 1993, after the PRG initiative had been launched, the average fell to just under 5 percent, a reduction of more than 60 percent" (Moloney, 2002 p.370).

Political developments followed in 1993 when the British and Irish and governments under John Major and Albert Reynolds issued the Downing Street Declaration. Significantly, it declared on the British side no strategic interest in Ireland and Northern Ireland. For its part, the Republic of Ireland indicated its willingness to change articles 2 and 3 of its constitution, removing its territorial claim to Northern Ireland. Each government affirmed the democratic right of self-determination of constitutional status by the majority of people of Northern Ireland. In August of 1994 the first Republican ceasefire was issued, followed several months later by a ceasefire called by the Combined Loyalist Military Command, an umbrella group of loyalist paramilitaries. In 1995 British and Irish Governments set out principles and parameters in the *Framework Document* (1995) that would help shape the basis for any future peace agreement creating provision for powersharing and north-south and east-west dimensions. President Bill Clinton's support of the political process was demonstrated both through a visit in 1995 and with the appointment of George Mitchell as envoy to Northern Ireland. Momentum, however, was set back when the PIRA's first ceasefire was broken in February 1996 with the bombing of Canary Wharf in London.

Despite, or perhaps as a result of, this transitional political context at the macro level during the summers of 1995 to 1997, local parading disputes became increasingly the source of escalated community tensions and conflict. Problems surfaced in Portadown during the summer of 1995 when the Orange Order was

banned from marching on the return leg of one of its traditional routes through the Nationalist Garvaghy Road. The decision resulted in several days standoff between the RUC and Orangemen with a solution reached after intervention by Mediation Northern Ireland mediators to allow for a negotiated return. The same march was banned the following summer in 1996 however; mounting Loyalist protests saw the decisions reversed. Nationalist outrage at the reversal led to serious community-wide rioting across Northern Ireland.

During the summer of 1996 a feeder parade known as the 'Tour of the North' was one of the earliest to be associated with violence. The parade route through contested areas of North Belfast made it vulnerable to interface inter-communal disturbances and, as a result, became one of the worst impacted due to violence and intimidation (Jarman 2005 p. 435). Activists working in these areas had to become increasingly resourceful and innovative and one example of this-was the development of a mobile phone network. The idea behind the mobile phone network came directly from practitioners working with the Community Development Centre (CDC), a locally based NGO working across interface areas in North Belfast. The summer of 1996, due to local violence, had left a financial cost of £10 million and over 100 families displaced (Jarman and CDC, 1999). Eager to prevent a future reoccurrence, in its aftermath, community activists and practitioners sought practical means to improve communication and dispel rumours that escalated tensions and often erupted into inter-communal rioting. Better communication was viewed as necessary for violence prevention as police responding to riots were often accused of making matters worse, while other statutory bodies were perceived as inaccessible to those facing the upheaval (Jarman, 2005; Jarman and CDC, 1999). As Jarman describes:

> "During the chaos accompanying the violence, lines of communication within communities, between communities, and between communities and government agencies providing essential public services collapsed. This meant that rumors circulated freely, with the corresponding escalation of suspicion and unrest, facilitating further violence and retaliation" (Jarman, 2005 p. 436).

Having consulted with other community organisations and statutory bodies it was agreed that a proactive plan was needed to prepare for the following summer to increase and improve communication, networking, and violence prevention. However, at the time the perception was that sharing direct phone numbers across the interface was too risky. To mitigate such risk, staff at the CDC proposed the idea that mobile phones- new technology at the time- might be used to facilitate a hub of community interface networks. A pilot project was secured to equip local community groups with mobile phones to be available 24 hours a day in order to keep lines of communication open between key community activists in volatile areas. Rather than having the phones associated with individuals, they were instead shared among groups and passed to volunteers on duty. The hope was that once rumours began, they might be quickly verified and dispelled prior to leading to any conflict escalation (Jarman and CDC, 1999; Hall, 2003; Jarman, 2005). Such was its success at dispelling brewing conflict that the subsequent summer the initiative became replicated in other interface areas of the city. While the CDC closed in 2001 due to funding cuts, mobile phone networks since have become important ways for interface workers to maintain communication, to dispel rumours and to prevent localised violence from escalating.

After the PIRA ceasefire breakdowns in 1996, another ceasefire was reinstated in July 1997, and by September Sinn Fein had signed up to the Mitchell principles that required a "commitment and adherence to fundamental principles of democracy and non-violence" (Mitchell, 1999 p.35). More specifically this included: the broad renunciation of the use of force to resolve political issues, a commitment to democratic and peaceful means to alter political agreements, a commitment to disarmament, and an end to punishment beatings and killings (Ibid, pp.35-36). Civil society groups, anticipating the need to help combatants anchor the move from armed conflict, began to involve ex-combatants in scoping the potential for restorative justice to be used as an alternative to punishment violence. These efforts will be discussed again more fully in the final phase of peacebuilding.

Encouraged at the progress being made in negotiations, but remembering the short-lived power-sharing executive in 1974 brought down by Loyalist workers, peace activists were concerned that any agreement would be a hard sell for politicians among their most suspicious and hard-line constituencies. With the recognition that risk-taking leadership would require public support, the 'Yes' campaign was an independent initiative conceived by a composite of voluntary sector and business leaders. In anticipation of a possible political agreement the campaign was assembled quickly in March 1998, roughly one month prior to agreement being reached. Officially launched on April 27, the campaign aimed to generate support for securing a yes vote for the island-wide referendum to be held on May 22, 1998.

Guelke's view is that while political parties largely ignored the campaign, it gave the "appearance of unity at the heart of the pro-Agreement cause" (Guelke, 2003 p. 73). Cochrane and Dunn's view was more overtly enthusiastic; describing the success of the 'Yes' campaign was evidenced by the success of the referendum itself:

> "[T]he eventual vote of 71 percent in favour of the Good Friday Agreement in the May 1998 referendum would have been significantly lower had it not been for its contribution to the political process" (Cochrane and Dunn, 2002 p. 182).

While it is not possible to determine its veracity, the statement seems reasonable given that the PIRA had not yet decommissioned, episodic violence continued, and there existed lower levels of Protestant support for the agreement. Those who took it upon themselves to organise the 'Yes' campaign, took nothing for granted.

Conclusion

This phase of peacebuilding, it could be argued, is built upon experience gained from earlier periods. Initiative ' 92 and the 'Yes' campaign both sought to animate civic debate beyond the political level. This recognition may have come in part from experiences, such a Sunningdale in 1974, when grassroots loyalist communities in

protest prevented power-sharing. Creating space for inclusive public debate may have been in part to expand the stage in the hope that by ensure all voices could contribute, any future settlement would stand greater chance of success. Another example of learning from experience is demonstrated by those involved in building up relationships and networks through the mobile phone networks. Anticipating the fault lines of conflict within interface area, processes were put into place to try to improve relationships, prevent violence, and build trust.

Trust, however, as Pollak writes of his experience in Initiative '92 was, at the time, in short-supply, and more easily lost than gained. His prescient observation that "Many people, especially in the areas most affected by violence, will do something for a person or an organisation only if they personally know and trust that person or organisation" suggests also the consequences of broken trust (Pollak, 1993 p.394). This dynamic was subsequently well illustrated by the loss of credibility for members of the PRG John and Diana Lampen after their submission mentioned the GRIT initiative, and was published in the Opsahl report. Lampen and Lampen (2005) in their own account, suggest that they consequently they became *persona non grata* and a year later, for different reasons, left Northern Ireland. Having read the submission in the Opsahl report, one observation is that information is less revealing than accounts suggest - and the reaction disproportionate. On the other hand, that any part of the GRIT strategy should have been shared publicly may also have been indicative of a lack of attention to the fragility of any trust gained and not enough regard paid to the consequences of lost credibility.

4.6. Phase 6: Two steps forward one step back (1999-2015)

Despite the success of the Good Friday Agreement, political and social instability remained high. Solidarity shown after a dissident Republican bombing in Omagh in August 1998 soon became strained over negotiations over the logistics and timetables for PIRA decommissioning. McKittrick and McVea (2012) described the early days of this period as marked by "a series of political and security crises. For

most of the time the peace process was in question" (McKittrick and McVea, 2012 p. 269). Difficulties over de-commissioning and allegations of an PIRA spy ring at Stormont saw power-sharing ended and direct rule reinstated from 2002 to 2007 (ibid). Power-sharing would remain mothballed until the St. Andrews Agreement of 2006 saw the DUP historically agree to share power with Sinn Fein and form an Executive.

Community-level instability echoed political instability in the early 2000s. A Loyalist feud resulted in local intimidation, deaths and the forced relocation of families, particularly in North Belfast. Interface communities such as Short Strand/Cluan Place and Ardoyne/Glenbryn in East and North Belfast and in Harryville on the outskirts of Ballymena, all experienced disruptive localised conflicts over territory and historic grievances. Civil society organisations intervened in a variety of ways - as mediators, peace monitors, and to promote dialogue and community development. Beyond a reactive role, grassroots and civil society actors in the early part of this phase were involved in vanguarding change through police reform, through promoting restorative justice, and in efforts to determine how to memoralise the legacy of conflict. While the Good Friday Agreement had established a political framework, its practical implementation benefited from civil society-based forethought.

Two steps forward: changing the context

While official policing reforms negotiated in the Good Friday Agreement came after the release of the *Report of the Independent Commission for Policing in Northern Ireland* (1999) known as the Patten report, unofficially organisational reform had already begun. From 1993, Mediation Northern Ireland had worked within the RUC to help rank and file police better understand the Nationalist community through their Community Awareness Programme (CAP). At the request of senior members of the RUC, CAP led to an expanded and ambitious initiative aimed at internal organisational reform. A three-year programme 'Policing Our Divided Society,' was subsequently designed by Mediation Northern Ireland and a local research think-

tank Future Ways, to explore and lay groundwork for internal organisational change. The project examined aspects of police culture and considered ways sectarian attitudes or practices explicitly or implicitly were reinforced by their organisational culture. International exemplars were used to build knowledge of alternative models of policing, for example, community-based policing. Senior level officers travelled to countries that had also experienced division between the community and police, or where ethnic integration within the police force had itself been a previous difficulty. Deliberately low profile to protect its sensitive nature, this project involved a considerable risk for those involved. Given that police and those who worked with police were each considered legitimate targets by the Provisional IRA and other Republican paramilitaries, this was a significant but lesser-known contribution made by a civil society-based organisation. In fact, scholars note that Patten's suite of recommendations has been fully implemented by the PSNI and that the transformation of the police service has been signaled as one of the successes of the political peace process (Dickson, 2006; Bayley, 2008). Therefore, it seems reasonable to surmise that these concerted efforts made a contribution to that success.

Another example of the vanguard role of civil society is found in the early work in restorative justice within both Loyalist and Republican communities- albeit this development occurred separately in each. Forward-thinking individuals within a local prisoner support NGO the Northern Ireland Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders (NIACRO), began to consider what might be needed to help move communities and armed combatants to transition away from violence. In 1996, NIACRO began to research restorative justice as a possible way to provide a role, status and mechanism for former combatants wishing to transition from violence and to positively impact their communities. Restorative justice also instrumentalised commitments made by armed groups to move away from prevalent practices of punishment-based violence, part of the Mitchell Principles and served as a de-facto form of DDR (Disarmament, Demobilisation and Re-integration) for early release prisoners. McEvoy and Mika (2002) explain:

> "These [restorative justice] projects were established in large part to facilitate paramilitaries moving away from violent punishment system developed over the last three decades. Community-based restorative justice based projects were designed to allow such paramilitaries to (in their terms) 'disengage responsibly' from such acts, handing dispute resolution responsibility back to the local communities from which the conflicts emanate" (McEvoy and Mika, 2002 p. 535).

As an example, Shankill Alternatives began in 1998 after NIACRO and ex-political prisoner Group EPIC conducted a community-based research project with local residents, paramilitaries and statutory representatives to consider alternatives to punishment shootings. Writing about its formation, staff member Billy Drummond states the organisation came into being, "[N]ot as an alternative to the formal justice system or to undermine or replace the police. Its aim was to offer a non-violent approach to dealing with anti-social activity…" (Drummond, quoted in Hall, 2000 p.5). Alternatives, initially focused on the Shankill, are currently run in five locations in Belfast. Since 2005 it has also operated in cooperation with statutory agencies such as the Public Prosecution Service of Northern Ireland, Youth Justice Agency and PSNI (Northern Ireland Alternatives, 2017).

Grappling with the reintegration and support for ex-prisoners was just one aspect of a broader set of tensions on the radar for civil society activists and peacebuilders within a post-Agreement context. Such discussions predated official governmental efforts such as the *Consultative Group on the Past,* which was established in 2007. Educational exchanges in the late 1990's with other post-conflict countries, for example, South Africa brought activists together to consider how to grapple with the legacy of conflict and its impact on society. In particular, a visit to Northern Ireland by Alex Boraine in 1999 initiated a series of conversations engaging this very question. Meeting with 61 groups and individuals, Boraine, as the Deputy Chairman of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission was asked to share his insights on truth recovery after a legacy of conflict. The hosting of Boraine's visit was sponsored by an unusual but important pairing of organisations whose constituencies had been highly impacted by the conflict- Victim Support Northern Ireland and the previously discussed prisoner support agency, NIACRO (HTR, 2017). *All Truth is Bitter,* a report produced about the consultation, acknowledges from the

start this unique pairing and the perspective it generated (NIACRO and Victim Support Northern Ireland, 2000). Written jointly by chairpersons of both organisations, the report's preface states that while their own constituencies have been uniquely impacted, efforts to address causes and consequences of conflict must be shared with the broader society:

> "As organisations working with ex-prisoners and victims, NIACRO and Victim Support are profoundly aware of the impact and consequences of that violence to individuals and their families. While there are many remarkable examples of both victims and perpetrators who have been able to move beyond the past, we have been left with a huge legacy of unresolved hurt and hatred. We also share a belief that our whole community must seek to understand and share responsibility for the complex causes as well as the cost of our conflict before we can move on together" (ibid, 2000 p.3).

The report recommended that wide-ranging discussions take place, and that they be broad and inclusive in order that multiple perspectives and complexity be captured. Momentum generated after the consultation led to the organisation Healing Through Remembering (HTR) being established in 2001. HTR describes itself as a member-driven voluntary initiative "whose purpose is to provide as much opportunity and learning as possible in order to inform broader debate about dealing with the legacy of the conflict" (HTR, 2017). Several key themes have been identified as areas of focus: storytelling, truth recovery and acknowledgment, a living memorial museum, the day of reflection, and commemorations (ibid). These themes have generated a variety of activities such as: *'Everyday Objects Transformed by Conflict,'* an art exhibition which featured submissions from the public of artefacts which had, during the conflict, taken on new or altered significance. HTR also spearheaded 'The Day of Reflection,' an annual commemoration held on June 21 to remember lives lost in the conflict - chosen for its symbolism as the longest day of the year. One hallmark of HTR's approach is that, rather than aiming for uniformity by offering a prescribed event for the 'Day of Reflection,' instead heterogeneity of activities is encouraged to reflect the complexity of the conflict.

One final example of civil society adopting a vanguard role can be illustrated by an initiative that built upon the successful intervention within a local contentious parade in west Belfast. In the early 2000s, working with police and republican communities, staff from Interaction facilitated the introduction of peaceful protests by Nationalists to a Loyal Order parade on the Whiterock Road - previously a long-standing dispute. This success led to a dialogue project piloted between district command police units and local Republicans in west Belfast known as 'the Managing Change Project' that ran from 2004 to 2006. Considered a useful prototype, the project was subsequently scaled up regionally across Northern Ireland once Sinn Fein had agreed to give their support to policing in 2007. The project that ran from 2007 to 2010 used what was described as a 'trust-building process' between Republicans, Loyalist activists and the PSNI. According to organisational documents, for example from June 2007 through to April 2008 the programme delivered a total of nine two-day workshops to a total of 144 senior managers in the PSNI, senior Republican activists including Sinn Fein members of DPPs, Loyalists and the PSNI (Interaction 2014 p.9). Writing about the success of this and other similar projects, Interaction's CEO Roisin McGlone states:

> "Our experience would demonstrate that once participants have made that psychological leap, significant progress can be made as was seen…in all of the trust-building processes we have developed. Furthermore changes, which were initially seen as negative, are now highlighted as examples of how participants have changed and developed positively…. Trust-building processes can be greatly enhanced at an early stage by the development and implementation of dedicated trust building and action planning processes between former enemies, which will expose and interrogate underlying prejudicial attitudes in a constructive and progressive manner and contribute to effective planning in the future" (ibid, p. 10-11).

Efforts such as these it could be argued may have helped pave the way for policing to become more acceptable within Republican circles and for local policing partnerships to operate with reduced hostilities. Sinn Fein took their place on the Policing Board in 2007 after power-sharing was restored when Ian Paisley and Martin McGuinness became First and deputy First Minister and justice matters became devolved. Dialogue projects such as 'Managing Change,' having operated

behind the scene to prototype new relationships between local Republican and PSNI, once scaled-up, likely played a role in helping to streamline this transition. The return in 2007 of a power-sharing executive ushered a period of symbolic 'firsts.' Two historic visits were made by Queen Elizabeth II- her first visit to the Republic of Ireland in 2011 saw the Queen greet the President of Ireland, Mary McAleese in Irish. This was followed in the next year by a trip to Northern Ireland where famously, she shook hands with deputy First Minister Martin McGuinness. Symbolic gestures were not only the source of rapprochement, but controversy. The following year, in December 2012 the decision to shift the flying of the Union flag outside City Hall from 365 days a year to a policy of designated days led to street protests and riots within some majority Protestant working class communities. At its height from 17-23 of December 2012 reports suggest 10,000 people were involved in street protests across Northern Ireland (Nolan et al, 2014). Thus, despite political progress the latter half of the phase ends marked by continuing areas of communal unrest.

One step back: the contraction of civil society peacebuilding

As this chapter has sought to demonstrate throughout a 50-year span, individuals and groups at the grassroots and within civil society have been involved in initiatives aimed at peacebuilding. Initially primarily grassroots-led, efforts were aided by financial investment made by international donors and from the European Union (EU). While funding had been available to Northern Ireland and from the 1970s through independent charitable sources such as the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust and, in 1989 through the International Fund for Ireland, after the ceasefires much greater sums of monetary support arrived from the European Union as an investment in the fledgling peace process. This investment enabled a substantial expansion of grassroots and civil society peacebuilding.

The EU Special Support Programme for Peace and Reconciliation or Peace I, for example, invested €500 million to address unemployment, build infrastructure and to support cross-border projects from 1995 to 1999 (Hayward et al*,* 2011 p.195).

Administered locally, Peace I received 31,000 applications with 15,000 gaining approval (Byrne et al, 2008 p.110). This level of funding was to expand over the next years during Peace II (2000 to 2006) and Peace III (2007 to 2013) with a total influx of funds from Peace I to Peace III reaching €1.524 million Euro over the course of two decades (Hayward et al, 2011 p.195). A snapshot to view the similar expansion of peacebuilding activity can be illustrated by a 1986 report on community-based peace-focused activities listing 45 community relations or reconciliation groups funded either by private philanthropy, or by central government through the Department of Education (Frazer and Fitzduff, 1986 p.7). By contrast, using data gathered by Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action (NICVA) in 2009, Acheson and Stringer (2011) cite 3500 to 5000 voluntary organisations (where much of formalised peacebuilding is now housed) and found that over half were estimated to have been established after 1986 (Acheson and Stringer, 2011 p.20). Though this expansion was certainly not only attributable to the influx of peace funding, it is not unreasonable to suggest that it has played a role.

The peacebuilding sector having expanded as a result of the influx of peace funding from 1995 to 2013, has in more recent years began to contract as international funds were reduced or withdrawn (Wilson, 2016). In an increasingly scaled-back funding environment, esteemed organisations viewed for years as stalwarts of peacebuilding were forced to shut. Gaps in funding cycles, particularly from the EU after the conclusion of Peace III as well as cuts in governmental funding, for example in the Department of Education's funds for community relations, have ushered in the closure of long-standing peacebuilding organisations. The Peace and Reconciliation Group (1976 to 2015) closed its doors in 2015 after more than 35 years of local behind the scenes mediation and cross-community work; the Spirit of Enniskillen (1989 to 2013) a cross-community reconciliation NGO established after the 1987 Enniskillen bomb in youth leadership development; the Northern Ireland Children's Enterprise (NICE), begun in 1978 to organised respite holidays for children and evolved in later years to promote school-based peacebuilding and youth development, closed down in 2017; the Workers Education Association (WEA) an adult and community education organisation aimed at community

empowerment and founded in 1910, shut their doors in 2014 due to cuts from the Department of Education (BBC News Northern Ireland, 2014). While it could be argued that these organisations have worked themselves out of a job, it could also be argued that organisations became inflated due to unsustainable expansion.

There is also evidence to suggest that organisations became overstretched by overly bureaucratic administrative burdens that became too restrictive and determinative. Akashi writes:

> "Initially, some organisations were pleased with availability of funding, especially considering the history of the poorly funded civil society sector. However, soon after EU funds began to be delivered, aimed at diverse projects, questions were raised as to the efficiency and direction of funds. Many residents particularly in interface areas, regarded funds as being misused and their communities exploited" (Akashi, 2011 p.216).

While this phase has experienced tensions associated with professionalisation and increased bureaucracy, it also evidences examples of practitioners and organisations opting to go their own way in order to remain relevant. One community-based foundation that has intentionally reduced its reliance on European grant funding is the Community Foundation for Northern Ireland (CFNI). Serving as an intermediary funding body for Peace I and II, CFNI were tasked with administering EU funds to local projects but when Peace III funds arrived, purposefully took a decision to reduce its role. In order to "innovate and take calculated risks" CFNI took a decision that more independent funding and autonomy was necessary (Stephenson and Zanetti, 2012 p.60). Considering what influenced the decision, CFNI's CEO at the time Avila Kilmurray, is quoted suggesting the decision was influenced by how the burdens of bureaucracy impacted practice decisions:

> "[N]either social justice issues nor effective community action are likely to be progressed through time-limited, micro-managed programmes that at times seem more answerable to the auditor than to the policymaker" (ibid, p.61).

Conclusion

This final phase of peacebuilding in some respects illustrated another significant context change as Northern Ireland experienced both political and social transitions post-Agreement. Peacebuilding examples profiled here demonstrated a prescience that served to vanguard change. The latter half of the 1990s saw civil society peacebuilders leant on heavily as service delivery agents for peace, which generated a proliferation of pilot projects and activity. However, the sector by the end of the phase began to experience a contraction of funding. Increasingly, practitioners identified that administrative burdens associated with bureaucratic and the 'professionalising of peace' directed practice choices, and at times this compromised relevancy. Esteemed organisations, struggling at the contraction increasingly found themselves unable to remain viable, a loss not only to livelihoods, but also creating a loss of phronetic learning about years of practical peacebuilding.

4.7 Lessons learned from 50 years of practical peacebuilding

One of the purposes of the chapter was to provide a snapshot of the range of activities taken over a fifty-year timespan and to consider what these actions may have been contributed within their own context. However, it was also to reflect upon possible accumulated learning from examples of practice and consider whether insights gained provide a different perspective than that which current literature holds. It is important to note that while some peacebuilding actors were predominately intervening to influence their own communities or broader society, others were involved with activities targeted at structures or institutions, and others focused on both. Despite variances, from this history three overarching themes surface about civil society and grassroots-led peacebuilding in Northern Ireland:

1) Close attention to process is important but may require invisibility.

2) Relationships are crucial but paradoxical - they both extend and limit agency and impact.

3) Viewed in the short-term peacebuilding may look ephemeral, but in the long-term has potential to become peacebuilding capital and a generative vanguard for social change.

1) Close attention to process is important but may require invisibility.

A theme found across different phases of peacebuilding was the importance of paying close attention to 'process'- its importance most noticeable when absent. Lederach writes: "[T]he pursuit of change involves some form of confrontation. Confrontation brings the conflict to the surface" (Lederach, 1997 p.65). One potential learning gained from the civil rights movement was that the process of how conflict is created and confrontation is managed is important. It could be argued that non-violent demonstrations had the potential to address root causes of conflict if they had remained non-violent and had gained representation from Protestants and Catholic, Unionist and Nationalist.

Instead, it could be argued that, paradoxically, demonstrations played some role in the shifting the context of conflict towards the likelihood of violent confrontations. Borrowing this technique from a different context contained inherent problems. The tactics of non-violent protest used by the civil rights movement in the US was adopted as a template within Northern Ireland but without commensurate training and preparation. The nature of sectarian geography in Northern Ireland was not fully considered with examples whereby Belfast-based civil rights organisers were unaware of local sectarian geography dynamics and planned marching routes may have played a role in exacerbating communal tensions.

Evident in early stages of the conflict was also the dynamic and adrenaline of physical violence. Once ignited, physical violence became easily flammable and

accelerates quickly within densely populated communities. Examples of containing conflict flammability surface in the work of peace committees in the 1970s and within interface areas in the 1990s. Whether "Dialling 58507 for peace" or using mobile phone networks across interface, each reflects knowledge of the context and how rumours can light a conflict fuse. Such flammability suggests, therefore, paying attention to process, pacing and to the visibility of change were important. Change needs carefully managed.

Examples also demonstrated that at times paying attention to process meant becoming invisible. Invisibility offered greater protection for risk-taking, useful to those operating as a backchannel of communication, whether that be with politicians, armed actors, or within the prison. As the GRIT process from Derry-Londonderry demonstrated once it was exposed in the Opsahl Report, hard won trust and credibility could be easily lost. Invisibility served to mitigate risk by offering creative ambiguity and the ability to, if necessary, deny knowledge. For example, the perception of tacit approval by the Catholic church of the behind the scenes negotiations between Father Reid and Adams was useful to politicians, but its 'invisibility' meant the church could also deny any official knowledge of such activities.

2) Relationships are crucial but paradoxical; they both extend and limit agency and impact.

A second theme that emerges over time for grassroots-level and civil society actors is the need adopt a Janus-face to balance intra and inter-communal relationships, simultaneously looking both forwards and backwards. Across phases, it was evident that peacebuilding activity was impacted by the balancing act of maintaining relationships, and that relationships both extended and limited agency. For example, when the Nationalist Derry Women Peace (DWP) took a stand in 1972 against the OIRA it was a challenge to their neighbours. Such efforts were difficult to sustain and came with a price (Hammond Callaghan, 2002). Hammond-Callaghan

describes it as a structural bind between the identity of being a mother and being Nationalist which ultimately limited the parameters of their peace activism. She quotes an ex-member's disappointment and a sense of isolation within their own community as a result of their efforts:

> "When I look back on it, at the way I neglected my home and my husband and my youngsters for other people, to try and bring peace and have a better community in our town, and got nothing but abuse for it" (Hammond Callaghan, 2002 p.45).

Nonetheless, Hammond Callaghan concludes that the efforts of this group may have had some role in "facilitating early diplomatic links" between the catholic Nationalist community and British officials, played a role expanding the Republican discourse towards, "peace with justice" and "pressuring the Republican leadership, who above all relied on their communities support to explore diplomatic possibilities for resolving the conflict" (Hammond Callaghan, 2002 p.45).

A further example of how the Janus-face limited peacebuilding agency is evidenced by the work of Women Together. Hammond Callaghan's analysis of Women Together surfaces a critique that internment was not actively denounced, and the topic avoided in cross-community meetings (Hammond Callaghan, 2006). However, one might suggest that this criticism does not account for the polarised context of the time. Just two years earlier during the summer of 1969, 3000 people fled their homes (Darby, 1983 p. 27). The tensions of maintaining relationships in a polarised context consequently limiting what can be addressed. This offers another explanation of why internment was not discussed as leaders may have viewed it as counter-productive to cross-community cohesion. In fact, in such a highly divided and polarised context, those who step out beyond their own tribe are quickly accused of being traitors, 'touts', and 'Lundys'. For example, church leaders who ventured at Feakle to meet members of the PIRA were subject to the most criticism from their own community (Brewer et al, 2011).

However, an examination of these phases also evidences that when a Janus approach successful balanced intra-and inter-communal credibility, this extended

peacebuilding agency. When key interveners were viewed as credible, this Janus-faced approach could at times deter violence; build networks and usher in change. For example, violence de-escalation initiatives such as peace committees were viewed as helpful in particular localised situations, their presence explaining variances in communal rioting in the summer of 1969 (Kelly, 2009; 2011). Kelly notes that those committees that were most effective had built up strong relationships in their local areas. In this and other examples, key people in leadership such as clergy and shop stewards were used as a moral authority to de-escalate potential problems on the streets and workplaces. Similarly, Quakers initiatives in prisons and in political intermediation demonstrated the pivotal nature of relationships in building networks and the length of time needed to build the necessary trust. Early work meeting with families in the visitors centre was viewed as an important first-step in the early seventies. This continued in the eighties during the Hunger Strikes, when established networks were used to help prisoners. Blair writes of Quaker staff Martie Rafferty, "Martie had direct access to a number of prison governors and was able to raise matters quickly and perhaps help to ameliorate some potentially violent reactions during these turbulent years" (Blair, 2009 p. 45). Cumulatively over time, these relationships and networks built a foundation that in later years created another platform for joint Republican Loyalist dialogue (Shirlow and McEvoy, 2008 pp.64-68; Williams and Fitzduff, 2007 p.21).

3) Viewed in the short-term peacebuilding may look ephemeral, but holds potential to become peacebuilding 'capital' and a generative vanguard for social change.

Writing about civil society peacebuilding Cochrane and Dunn (2002) have described that high profile anti-violent movements were often viewed as ephemeral. However, one overlooked dimension of such ephemeral activities has been their generative functions. The Peace People, for example, might have been considered more ephemeral; it mobilised demonstrations in the autumn of 1976 which attracted numbers as high as 50, 000 but soon saw these numbers evaporate in the subsequent months (Fairmichael, 1987). Despite this, as was profiled in phase 3 of peacebuilding, four organisations emerged directly and indirectly from networks

affiliated with the Peace People (ibid). Therefore, it may seem that organisations and initiatives appear ephemeral, but often peacebuilding initiatives continue in another form. For example, Reverend Eric Gallagher was connected to many different initiatives reflected in this account. He first appears in Bleakley's (1972) account of August of 1969 giving a speech to workers at Harland and Wolff shipyards (Phase 2) to persuade them not to riot. He features again in the Feakle Talks (Phase 3), and again in Initiative '92 (Phase 5). It could be speculated that gathering a range of experience throughout different stages of conflict might constitute a form of peacebuilding capital.

Building from the previous observation, the suggestion is that with the right timing, this form of capital could be utilised and act as a vanguard. Several examples throughout peacebuilding phases illustrate that prescient individuals in civil society and within organisations anticipated peacebuilding and political developments and acted fortuitously. For example, the development of restorative justice in many respects became a vehicle to reintegrate ex-combatants within the communities transitioning from violence. As mentioned, restorative justice work was initiated in 1996 by NIACRO, a local NGO not long after the ceasefires but before the Good Friday Agreement. Restorative justice, it could be argued, helped society begin to plan for the reality of prisoner release and need for working towards their reintegration. Furthermore, youth justice statutory bodies have now also adopted restorative justice and work with community-based restorative bodies to deter youths from anti-social behaviours. As another example, work undertaken with the RUC in the early 1990s by Mediation Northern Ireland enabled a wider project of institutional RUC reform to be undertaken several years later, but prior to official police reforms. As mentioned, this may have played a contributing role in the successful implementation of the reforms when they became mandatory. Fitzduff and Williams (2007) while not using the terms peacebuilding capital suggest it as an explanation for why civil society actors were important in Northern Ireland for progressing peace:

> "It was civil society who had a low enough profile and sufficient enough credibility to make contact, build trust and convene discussion across the divide with prisoners, paramilitaries, government ministers, community leaders, and civil servants. This became important at a later stage, when key actors were testing whether it had become acceptable to entertain contact with previously marginalised figures" (Fitzduff and Willams, 2007 p.31).

Conclusion

Using a different yardstick to measure the impact of grassroots and civil society peacebuilding has generated new insights. Viewing the activity over this time-span with the lens of phronesis provides an alternative view than much of the current literature. Focusing instead on the particular activities in their own context, the investigation has illustrated that many of its strengths are also what make it hard to measure. Firstly, the ability to stay under the radar, and take a low profile and at times become invisible is a key strength. Secondly, relationships are vitally important in civil society peacebuilding. However, grassroots and civil society actors are, in fact, embedded in communities and this may limit or exponentially expand what can be achieved. The balancing act of maintaining a Janus-faced approach can present a polarity of counterweights. It can be challenging for civil society actors as they seek to hold tension between both maintaining intra-communal credibility and inter-communal relationships necessary for progressing peace. Finally, such activity, when viewed over the short-term may seem ephemeral, and fall short of achieving impact. However when viewed over the long-term, and particularly when peacebuilding capital is counted as impact, the generative role and vanguard potential for civil society peacebuilding is increasingly illuminated.

The next chapter continues this investigation into what peacebuilding practitioners have learned from practice by introducing the research design and methodology. It outlines all stages of the research process and details relevant decisions that through the course of the research took an iterative turn. The chapter will explain initial research decisions and design choices and why; it will likewise discuss changes made and why. Finally, the chapter seeks to extend the discussion of the

concept of phronesis by demonstrating how its emergent conceptualisation intersected and impacted the research process at broad points across the research methodology.

Chapter 5: Methodology

Introduction: Research as an iterative and creative process

Not long after undertaking the doctoral programme, one of the research supervisors, Professor Brandon Hamber, reflected that research was by its nature an unfolding process and it was, at times, necessary to allow space for creativity and 'not knowing.' This comment may have been generated by my, at times, rigid view of what I imagined was a necessary and stiff formality in the academic pursuit of a PhD and it came as a breath of fresh air. This freedom allowed me to engage deeply with the research and become responsive to the unexpected, even when it deviated from the original design. This chapter describes the iterative process the research has taken. It begins by outlining the original research design and how the research was initially executed; however, it then highlights how the emerging data began to reshape subsequent research choices and plans. This is described as one of the strengths of using an iterative approach:

> "The role of iteration, not as a repetitive mechanical task but as a deeply reflexive process is key to sparking insight and developing meaning. Reflexive iteration is at the heart of visiting and revisiting the data and connecting them with emerging insights, progressively leading to refined focus and understandings" (Srivastava and Hopwood, 2009 p.77).

My original hypothesis when undertaking the research was that grassroots peacebuilding practitioners had gained 'usable knowledge' (Schön, 1987) through their efforts living and working to build peace in a context of protracted violent conflict, and a deeper examination would reveal that a significant understanding of applied peacebuilding practice had been developed. I proposed that if consolidated, such knowledge would add coherency to improve local practice, and had the potential to strengthen social policy implementation when promoting social cohesion, shared space and addressing areas of division by shedding light on the sets of circumstances that support peace on the ground.

Therefore the original aim of the research was firstly, to address the gaps within the peacebuilding academic literature by exploring what practitioners working within

grassroots and civil society in Northern Ireland had *learned from their practice* (over the span of 50 years 1965-2015) which might contribute to academic peacebuilding theory, and consider what *experience-based theory* might add to the international and local fields to address practice-theory gaps. Secondly, to address the 'incoherency' in local peacebuilding practice by consolidating knowledge about methodologies, exploring implicitly held assumptions and theories of change, and by harnessing knowledge gained from a wide-variety of approaches taken at different stages of the conflict. Consequently, the purpose of the research, as initially envisioned, was to explore the localised theories and models of peacebuilding emerging from grassroots-level and civil society-based peacebuilding practice with the following research question:

> *"What have actors working at the grassroots level and within civil society-based initiatives learned as a result of their peacebuilding and conflict transformation practice? In particular, have practitioners gained knowledge of factors which they would identify as being "catalytic" in building peace and transforming conflict, and if so, what might this knowledge add to current peacebuilding theory and practice locally and globally?"*

Having articulated the research question, the decision was made to use a two-phased qualitatively based inductive approach to answer the research question. Phase 1 would be used to conduct interviews with 40 practitioners who had worked within grassroots-level and civil society-based initiatives to build peace within the time frame of fifty years, from 1965-2015. The choice of this time frame was made after the initial literature review was undertaken which focused on local peacebuilding practice. It was at this stage the decision was made that much of the roots of practice development had their origins at earlier stages. Therefore it was decided to use the wider span of time to comprehensively outline stages of development. Using this broader span of time brought challenges, for example, the concern to adequately cover such a widespread development of diverse practices within civil society peacebuilding. However, it was felt that these would be outweighed by the advantage of viewing development and learning from practice over a broader arc of the cycle of conflict.

In Phase 2, I had planned to build theory using the concepts and data collected from interviews. Practically, I planned to meet with 6-8 peacebuilding practitioners on two occasions, drawn from any interviewees from phase 1 who indicated an interest in theory building. The aim of the group was to work collectively with the salient concepts drawn from the data to build theory. Using an iterative approach, emerging theoretical conceptualisations generated in the first session would subsequently be further developed by the research team, composed of my three doctoral supervisors (Professor Duncan Morrow, Professor Brandon Hamber and Graínne Kelly) and then brought back to the practitioner-group during a second meeting for further refining.

The research design was conceptualised using a knowledge production model created for the URBAN project, an affiliate of Co-Lab housed at the school of Urban Planning at The Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). Designed to co-produce knowledge with community groups in public planning, a MIT Co-Lab concept paper described that the model "rested on four pillars:"

> 1) Recognition of the value and importance of non-technical expertise;
>
> 2) Seeking to work beyond disciplinary silos;
>
> 3) Knowledge-creation judged both on the basis of its practical utility and its contribution to theory; and
>
> 4) A cyclic or spiral planning-action-observation-reflection process, involving multiple stakeholders and disciplines (MIT-Co-Lab, 2012 p.3).

Viewed as having compatible goals with the purposes and aims for knowledge production with practitioners included in this research, the model was later adapted for theory building with these purposes in mind (see Appendix 1).

However, the conceptualisation of phronesis began to emerge during latter stages of data analysis and following the first group theory-building sessions led to a decision to truncate the original research design. This shift will be more fully explored in this chapter at section 5.4 detailing phase two of the research process. In brief, throughout data analysis and during theory-building groups I was struck by the way practitioners thought about their peacebuilding choices, how they used

their judgment to 'know' what to do, and in particular what it revealed both about their judgment (sources of knowing) and their context. Given that it had emerged as one of the most salient themes from the data, it began to shed light on why context might be important. While I had not set out to look for phronesis, its evidence in the data became a lens that created an unexpected layer of insight and explanation. At this stage, after consultation with the research team, a decision was made to discontinue the theory-building as it had been originally outlined in the research design and instead focus on what seemed to be emerging - phronesis as an epistemology of practice. This chapter therefore, outlines the roadmap of this research project describing each stage of the research, what choices and decisions were made at different points as they were informed by and informing of, each subsequent stage.

5.1 Research timeline

The research investigation included six stages of activity that will each be summarised and can be viewed as a table in the Appendix (see Appendix Number 2). Research included the following stages: design stage; phase 1 fieldwork which included conducting 40 interviews; transcribing and reviewing all interviews; coding and analysis; phase 2 fieldwork involving theory-building with practitioners; and thesis write-up. The research design stage covered roughly one year and included the production of three separate literature reviews, the designing of the research question, and ethical approval sought and obtained. Shortly thereafter, phase 1 of fieldwork commenced which involved recruiting and interviewing 40 practitioners and lasted just over seven months. After all interviews had been completed, each was transcribed, reviewed and verified by interviewees over the span of sixteen months. Next, coding and analysis of all transcribed interviews was accomplished over six months and led to phase 2 fieldwork, theory-building with practitioners. This stage lasted two months - truncated to proceed to the final stage of the research, the writing of the thesis.

5.2 Design stage

The design stage of the research spanned the time frame of a year and as noted included the production of three separate literature reviews, the development of the research question, consideration of methodological choices and ethical approval sought and gained.

5.2.1 Literature Review

Several desk-based literature reviews were undertaken in order to inform the development of the research question, to make appropriate methodological choices, and contextualise the research within extant literature. Three themes in particular were explored: peacebuilding and conflict transformation theory and practice; grassroots-level and civil-society based peacebuilding practice literature both locally and internationally; and literature concerned with knowledge production. The literature on peacebuilding and conflict transformation theory and practice was used to trace the development of the field, define relevant concepts employed in the research question; for example, conflict transformation (Lederach, 1995) sustainable and integrated peacebuilding (Lederach, 1997); positive and negative peace (Galtung, 1975) and stages of conflict (Curle, 1971). The same review covered recent scholarly debate concerned with bottom-up, grassroots-level and civil-society-based intervention both locally and globally. A second literature review covered the period of 1965-2015 in order to provide a historical context to better situate peacebuilding practice and development in Northern Ireland. The third literature review considered the acquisition of professional knowledge, reflective practice, and knowledge for social change, as well its intersections with philosophical and epistemological roots from diverse sources from the fields of education, urban planning and ancient philosophy. Once a research question was constructed, literature reviewed focused on qualitative research methodologies to determine which might be most appropriate. A brief summary of these main methodological influences will be given to highlight the contribution of each towards main choices within the overall research design.

5.2.1 Building the research question: methodological choices

Galtung, one of the earliest theorists to influence peace research, was conscious in his early writing on peace research that research even in the name of peace had the potential to become exploitative and inadvertently reinforce structural violence (Galtung, 1975). From the outset, this research sought to mitigate that possibility. Furthermore, given that at its heart the research question took the perspective that practitioners had been under-utilised and under-valued as knowledge creators, this point was particularly salient. For this reason, my conscious approach in conducting the research was, as feminist researchers Stanley and Wise (1983) advise, to avoid making research choices that might further exacerbate knowledge subordination. This is identified as approaches that "position the researcher in a knowledge hierarchy with- or rather over- those they research" (Stanley and Wise, 1983 p.7). Given that theory building with practitioners had been one of the intended outcomes of the research process, at every step of the way I was eager to build opportunities to demonstrate commitment to the view that practitioner-based knowledge was of value. While I did not elicit the research question from my participants or seek to solve a problem jointly identified, the aspirations of action research to impact real world concerns was also germane. Texts outlining the need to bring research and practice closer together, such as those promoted in action research through participatory approaches informed my background reading (Heron, 1996; Lundy and McGovern, 2006; Fetherston and Kelly 2007; Swantz, Reason and Bradbury, 2008).

Finally, research methodology was influenced by ideas promoted by Bent Flyvbjerg, who, alongside fellow social science scholars (Schram and Caterino, 2006; Flyvbjerg et al, 2012) has utilised the concept of phronesis, albeit for a different purpose and scale. Particularly relevant to scrutinise my own aspiration to build theory within the research, Flyvbjerg's argument made at the macro-level takes aim at social science and critiques its aspiration for generalisable and cumulative theory (Flyvbjerg, 2001).

In his persuasive text, *Making Social Science Matter* Flybvjerg makes the case that social science is essentially competing in a battle which he refers to as "the science wars," it will never win (Flyvbjerg, 2001 p.1). His argument also draws from Aristotle's discussion of the virtues of knowledge, arguing that social sciences is currently modelled after the natural sciences which he compares to Aristotle's understanding of episteme, capable of producing generalisable universal theory that is cumulative and predictive. However, as he views it, social science can never hope to be cumulative or universally predictive because it deals with human subjectivity, context and complexity. As he puts it:

> "The study of social phenomena is not, never has been, and probably never can be, scientific in the conventional meaning of the word "science;" that is, in its epistemic meaning. We will also see that it is therefore not meaningful to speak of "theory" in the study of social phenomena, at least not in the sense that "theory" is used in natural science" (Flyvbjerg, 2001 p.25).

He instead suggests that the concept of phronesis is a better fit for social science as it offers a match for the type of knowledge social science can produce. Social science should, therefore, defer from aspiring toward episteme and turn instead toward phronesis, knowledge for practical action for the wellbeing of human affairs. For Flyvbjerg, aspiring towards a phronetic social science also necessitates a need to balance what he describes as value-rationality with instrumental rationality. In this way, social science can better play to its strengths as it is better equipped at producing knowledge which answers value-rational questions such as, "Where are we going? Is it desirable? What should be done?" (Flyvbjerg, 2001 p.60). Conceptually, these key questions tied into my aspiration that the research might generate usable knowledge built from practical experience, but also challenged it further by asking whether unifying theory was a laudable aspiration for peace research. I considered that reflections on this question might be uncovered by the research. At the initial design stage I anticipated that theory generated would likely not be considered 'grand theory' but rather more similar to what Lederach describes as middle-range theory such as the development of a conceptual framework (Lederach, 1997), or possibly a locally-based theory of peacebuilding.

Finally, as mentioned in the introduction of this thesis, from the outset I recognised my own subjectivity within the research question. In this regard this research design adopted the constructivist perspective that feminist researchers and other social scientists have argued, namely that the quest for complete objectivity and that researchers do not bring their own perspectives and subjective lenses into their research is a misnomer (Gilligan, 1982, Stanley and Wise, 1983; Charmaz 2006; Braun and Clarke, 2013). In fact, such authors suggest subjectivity can be considered a source of knowledge from which to draw, but in doing so, necessitates conscious reflexivity.

Practically speaking, the outcome of such influences was to build into the research design opportunities to demonstrate at all stages a participatory ethos, open and transparent communication, and an inclusive sharing of information. I aimed to be diligent in my communication and to demonstrate trustworthiness in my actions. This intention was built into the research design and evidenced, for example, by not only offering interviewees anonymity but to give each a copy of their own transcript to review and sign off its accuracy. There were practical implications involved in taking this approach, some of which were challenging. For example, I had to send multiple reminder emails to interviewees to ask that transcripts be approved. Most practitioners were responsive to my requests; however, there were a handful that never responded. For these interviewees I included a paragraph that stated if I did not hear from them I would consider that they approved of the transcript. However, in order to err on the side of caution, I have chosen to minimise the use of quotes by any of the interviewees from whom I did not receive transcript approval and confirmation. While this limited some of my choices of evidence, it had a minimal impact as the majority of interviewees did approve their transcripts. Thus, advantages of taking such a participatory approach outweighed the disadvantages proving particularly important when interviews revealed that previous experiences of collaboration with academics had not always been successful.

5.2.2 Research design

As the research question became solidified, this clarity generated a next series of design decisions. For example, I decided that because the nature of my question was quite broadly focused on 'what had been learned about change' it was more suitable for qualitative and inductive approaches. Sampling decisions were made in order to choose criteria for interviewee selection among practitioners and tools developed to ensure a broad and representative sample from a wide-range of peacebuilding practices. Interviews were selected as the best method for capturing the data with considerations towards eliciting and encouraging open-ended discussions on learning from practice. Ethical considerations were addressed during the design stage in order to identify, prevent and minimise potential risks associated with the research. Each of these points will be discussed more fully below.

5.2.2.1 Qualitative and inductive research approaches

As a result of many of the epistemological and theoretical influences, choices were made early on that taking a qualitative and inductive approach would best serve to answer the research question. As Braun and Clarke (2013) write, qualitative research differs from quantitative approaches because it is centrally interested in capturing meaning not numbers:

> "At its core, qualitative research is about capturing some aspect of the social or psychological world. It records the messiness of real life, puts an organising framework around it and interprets it in some way" (Braun and Clarke, 2013 p.20).

Having determined that practitioners' voices had not been adequately captured by the academic literature in any consolidated manner, the research question posited that stories of practice contained potential insights for knowledge creation from lived experience. However, as has been suggested, data gathered would not likely produce a 'single answer' but would contain more than one possible way to make

meaning in the data generated and therefore, well suited within the qualitative paradigm (ibid). In order to gain the widest sets of insights into practice, the research necessitated representation that spanned a variety of types of peacebuilding activity. For this reason, an inductive approach was selected to try to investigate possible theoretical underpinnings in change processes. It was hoped that themes generated through taking such an inductive approach would serve as building blocks for theory building with practitioners.

While not strictly following methods outlined for inductive grounded research, theorists such as Charmaz (2006) who describes her approach as using constructivist grounded theory were also drawn upon. Charmaz writes:

> "I chose the term 'constructivist' to acknowledge subjectivity and the researcher's involvement in the construction of data….My position aligns well with social constructivists…[who] stress social contexts, interaction, sharing viewpoints, and interpretative understandings. These constructivists view knowing and learning as embedded in social life" (Charmaz, 2006 p. 14).

Grounded approaches were also useful for distilling the related sets of concepts that were embedded in practitioners' experiences of peacebuilding. Distillation of key underpinning concepts would, I imagined, serve to form a cluster of ideas to shape the skeleton of the theory-building process. Charmaz's constructivist approach informed my understanding that even this distillation process which germinated from coded themes would be determined by my own lens. Thus, reflexivity was built into the research design by memo writing after interviews, during transcribing and at subsequent stages of analysis. Furthermore, memo writing became an important first step in tracking my own analytical thinking and formulation of ideas which would, at later stages, impact coding decisions. In one particular example, early memo writing led to questions and insights that I pursued in an email exchange with one interviewee, thus generating a deeper level of understanding and in this particular case, evidencing their phronetic epistemology of practice (see section 7.1).

5.2.2.2 Purposive 'snowball' sampling and research tools

In order to begin to answer the research question, I chose a purposive approach by establishing the goal of interviewing 40 practitioners who had primarily worked within grassroots and civil society peacebuilding between the years of 1965-2015, and who might be considered 'reflective practitioners.'

I defined peacebuilding using Lederach's and Galtung's conceptualisations to include those working to address both systemic violence and direct violence and inclusive of multiple types of approaches to building peace. Lederach expansively defines his understanding of peacebuilding as:

> "A comprehensive concept that encompasses, generates, and sustains the full array of processes, approaches, and stages need to transform conflict toward more sustainable, peaceful relationships. The term thus involves a wide range of activities and function that both precede and follow formal peace accords…a comprehensive approach to the transformation of conflict that addresses structural issues, social dynamics of relationship building, and the development of a supportive infrastructure for peace" (Lederach, 1997 pp. 20-21).

Practitioner was a term that I loosely defined to represent anyone who was engaged in purposeful practical activities aimed at peacebuilding using Lederach's definition. The term practitioner, therefore, was not exclusive to those engaging in peacebuilding from a professional capacity, and included those whose involvement was voluntary. Within the list of interviewees, while some might have linked their peacebuilding directly to its intersection with their chosen profession, for others it was linked more indirectly.

I defined 'reflective practitioner' using a description provided by Lederach, Neufeldt and Culbertson (2007) from *Reflective Peacebuilding*. These authors identified a reflective practitioner as: "a person who includes time to dig into and elaborate the too-often implicit theories of change that guide his or her daily activity and projects" (Lederach et al, 2007 p.3). For my purposes, this was stream-lined as a practitioner who demonstrated '*critical thinking about their work, questioning their own assumptions about what works and why*.**'**

Snowball sampling using 'maps' of local peacebuilding

In order to locate potential interviewees, snowball sampling was also selected as an approach that dovetailed well with using this sampling criterion. While the doctoral research supervisors Professor Duncan Morrow, Professor Brandon Hamber and Graínne Kelly were well known to local peacebuilding practitioners, it was determined that snowball sampling maximised the ability to gain trust with potential interviewees. Snowball sampling has been argued to be particularly effective in conflict contexts to gain entry with interviewees who may be naturally more distrustful of those who are unknown to them (Cohen and Arieli, 2011). These authors writing about this method of data collection state:

> "A central factor in gaining access to and enlisting the cooperation of subjects is trust…The knowledge that the researcher was referred by a trusted person increases the potential for trust and cooperation in providing data" (Cohen and Arieli p. 428).

The disadvantages of snowball sampling mirror its strengths as it may lack sampling representation. However, it was decided that the development of field mapping tools could counteract this potential deficiency. Snowball sampling was also useful to gain recommendations about who was considered reflective. This was important given the variety of sectors of practice involved and it complemented the knowledge of the field held by members of the research team.

As mentioned, in order to maximise representation that reflected this expansive definition of peacebuilding, and to simultaneously ensure practitioner representation in regards to geography, gender, age, ethno-communal/ religious background, as well as length of time in practice, I developed and tested three mapping tools to both guide and to use within data gathering. The first map in some respects corresponds to the broadest categories of practice identified in Chapter 4, and was intended initially to conceptualise and gain representation from the different sectors (Appendix 3), the second map grafted the practice sectors identified in the first map onto Lederach's diagram *Actors and Approaches to Peacebuilding* (Lederach, 1997 p.39) within levels of peacebuilding engagement: grassroots, mid-range and political (Appendix 4). Finally, the third map was

developed to add nuance to account for differing levels of conflict impact among civil society, for which I used the term saturation (Appendix 5). This was, in part, to investigate whether change processes and levels of saturation had any corresponding relationship.

The sector-based maps (maps 1 & 2) included thirteen sectors of peacebuilding practice that carried areas of overlap but were largely indicative of the range of issues, the peacebuilding constituencies involved, and the variety of extant local peacebuilding approaches germane to Northern Ireland (see Table 2 below). After initially trying all three, I eliminated the first as redundant and used only map 2 (based on Lederach's diagram) and map 3 (conflict saturation) with the majority of interviewees.

Table 2**: Sectors involved in peacebuilding activity in Northern Ireland**

Sectors	**Types of Peacebuilding**
Education and Research	Practitioners working both with formal primary and post-primary schools (i.e. controlled, maintained and integrated), non-formal education and youth works, as well as research and teaching within universities. This category also included those working within prison education.
Economics	Practitioners working with the Trade Unions or the business communities to promote peacebuilding from an economic basis. Trade Unions involvement also includes advocacy and mobilising demonstrations against violence or sectarianism committed against members of the workforce.
Justice and Equality	Practitioners working to promote human rights, security reforms, and within restorative justice.
Community Relations/Social Cohesion	Practitioners working within mediation, reconciliation and community and/or good relations, primarily working to promote attitudinal changes, increased contact and skills to manage and build improved relationships.
Community Development	Practitioners working within intra-communal and/or inter-communal geographical settings to address local capacity, infrastructure and development needs including environmental and community regeneration.
Contested and Shared Spaces/Interfaces	Practitioners working to address geographically based issues or manage disputes concerned with contested space such as interfaces, peace-walls, parading and flag flying disputes and/or how to build increased shared public space.
Dealing with the Past	Practitioners who were primarily focused on promoting dialogue or engagement to address unresolved legacy issues, or engaged in archival, commemoration or storytelling activities.
Culture: Media, Arts and Sports	Practitioners who use a variety of arts (drama, visual, music, film) language, or sport-based approaches to address or promote peacebuilding.
Gender	Practitioners focused on working to highlight the role of gender in conflict, promote gender inclusion and equality. Often also included are activities to women's personal development, increase agency and capacity and to build greater social cohesion across divided communities.
Former Combatants	Practitioners working with- and often from- backgrounds as former combatants and involved in a number of sectors i.e. restorative justice, community development and regeneration, dialogue groups and interface management. For the purpose of this research with its focus on civil society, this category only included non-state armed actors.
Funders	Practitioner funders have helped co-design peacebuilding development or take an active oversight role in building capacity within local communities with the aim of longer-term sustainability.
Faith-based	Practitioners from a faith-based imperative (Catholic, Protestant Ecumenist, Para-church group) who become involved in peacebuilding activities, either in an official or unofficial capacity.
Victims	Practitioners whose work primarily promotes support and advocacy to address needs of victims harmed and suffering as a result of the legacy of direct violence and/or/both the systemic state violence as a result of the conflict.

5.2.2.3 Methods of data collection: semi-structured interviews

In order to elicit substantial and rich data from practitioners about their practice, semi-structured interviews were chosen as the most appropriate method for gathering data. A semi-structured approach was considered most suitable in order to allow for the greatest amount of flexibility within the interview for pulling out theoretical salience. The interview was divided into roughly seven parts and included: 1) how interviewees had 'entered' peacebuilding; 2) main influences on approaches taken or methodologies; 3) stories of practice including both challenges and successes; 4) observations of change processes and change catalysts; 5) views on reflective practice; 6) practice knowledge value, creation and dissemination; 7) interacting with analytical maps on sectors of practice (for interview questions see Appendix 6). While all sections were viewed as important, the core thrust of the interview was to capture the stories of practice and what interviewees had learned about social change processes.

In order to best capture this information, a decision was made in the research design stage to ask practitioners to tell stories of practice and to share examples of interventions or initiatives in which they had been involved that they viewed as 'successful' or had gone as they hoped, as well as stories of practice 'failures' or cases that had not met their expectations. These practice stories were given priority in the interviews because it was believed they could contain ideas important for generating theoretical insights from practice. Furthermore, design decisions to prioritise story telling were influenced in part by literature which profiled learning from practice. Particularly insightful was a case study published by Catholic Relief Services which outlined a story-telling process undertaken with fieldworkers in East Timor (Catholic Relief Services, 2004). In the case-study, knowledge gained from practice was explored through workshops with fieldworkers who used their own written stories as a tool of analysis to synthesise key learning insights which latterly guided field planning in the region (Lederach et al, 2007 p.69; Catholic Relief Services, 2004). When asked why this approach was taken, Philip Visser the architect of the process reflects:

> "I asked myself where does the knowledge reside? Eventually the idea came that those with experience, the fieldworkers who stand in the interface between aid and people, should tell a story to capture their knowledge" (Lederach et al., 2007 p.69).

Further insights on the potential for using storytelling were gained from literature that focused on a monitoring and evaluation approach described as 'The Most Significant Change' technique (Davies and Dart, 2005). Created for assessing impact associated with international development programmes, the approach uses storytelling to assess what stakeholders viewed as most important changes from a given intervention. Davies and Dart describe this technique as a better tool to use in complex contexts to qualitatively understand what has been "learned" by change initiatives (Davies and Dart, 2005 pp.12-13). They also indicate that this approach lends itself well to analysis because storytellers have to explain why they believe certain changes were more important than others, and is useful in portraying a "rich picture of what is happening" (ibid: p.12). Given that the research question was hoping to discern what practitioners had learned about influencing social change processes and to interrogate theoretical underpinnings, telling stories of what had or had not 'worked' I believed would allow for deeper probe of the nuanced details within their examples.

In order to elucidate aspects of change that might not be easily verbalised, I chose to include a question that asked interviewees to think about changes they had observed or helped to bring about- and to find a metaphor that might best describe their view of that change. Metaphors are described as useful tools for providing an insight into worldviews, and creating new understandings as they juxtapose, combine, and transfer meaning from two initially unrelated ideas (Barrett and Cooperrider, 1990; Lederach, 1995). Metaphor can be useful when language itself cannot adequately capture experience. As Barrett and Cooperrider describe it: "Good metaphors provoke new thought, excite us with novel perspectives, vibrate with multi-vocal meaning, and enable people to see the world with fresh perceptions not possible in any other way" (Barrett and Cooperrider, 1990 pp. 222-223). This question generated useful insights beyond my initial planning, and when

combined with stories of practice, yielded a substantial level of nuance, detail and insight that proved highly relevant during the stages of data analysis.

5.2.2.4 Ethical considerations

An application was made for ethical approval to conduct the research; it outlined the focus, aims and its intended outcomes and included all ethical considerations. Submitted initially in July 2014, it was granted approval by Ulster University in October 2014. Below all ethical considerations are discussed.

Given that the focus of fieldwork was to interview practitioners the research was deemed low-risk. However, given that the research involved human subjects, I followed all standard ethical procedures such as using only participants who have signed informed consent documents (Appendix 7), provided subject information outlining the research (Appendix 8), and only interviewed those over the age of eighteen. In addition, there were specific ethical issues within the current research design that I felt also need to be considered carefully. The first was to anticipate that practitioners interviewed may worry that candid discussions of their professional practice may include self-criticism contained in stories of failures which may negatively impact their own funding streams. Likewise, working from a small and closely connected practice environment, this might have a more detrimental impact. Similarly, because I was known and knew personally and professionally many local peacebuilding practitioners it was possible that I might know those who are referred as potential interviewees, and therefore, navigating potential conflicts of interest with transparency was important.

In order to facilitate addressing these concerns, all research participants were assured anonymity. During the second phase of the research which involved working with theory development groups (to be addressed in discussion of Phase 2), I asked for the Chatham House Rule to be agreed to and a second consent form signed (Appendix 9). While theory-building meetings were recorded, this information was only used for the purpose of tracking accuracy and stages of theory development process.

A second associated ethical issue stems from earlier points made about tensions within knowledge creation processes experienced by practitioners. This was the perception among practitioners that, at times, academic researchers conduct their research without due consideration taken for those providing the 'data.' For example, by not adequately acknowledging that information gained was made possible by the practitioner, or feeding back to those involved outcomes of the research. It was therefore important that this research did not add to this perception of disempowerment, but instead hold a possibility of validating knowledge gained from working within this sector about what has been learned about the task of peacebuilding.

In order to address these perceptions and to engender more collaborative and participatory approaches, at all stages of the research I intentionally chose to be as transparent as possible about each step of the research process during all interviews, focus groups, emails and interactions. I emphasised that participants' contributions were integral to the research aims to distil knowledge gained from practice. Furthermore, I reiterated that a potential outcome of the research was to use insights to inform and impact social policies which affected their practice. As mentioned previously, a practical outworking of this intentional commitment to transparency was to have all transcripts sent back to the interviewees for their approval, and to give them an opportunity to review again what had been recorded.

At all stages of the research I emphasised that participant's involvement in the research had the potential to strengthen the effectiveness of the field of peacebuilding both in theory and in practice in a local and international context. From the outset, I indicated my willingness to work with groups or individuals wishing to use any materials generated through the research process, and to find ways to collaborate as long as that does not infringe on any Intellectual Property rights criteria or parameters which I had already agreed to as a doctoral student with Ulster University. Finally, I informed them of my intention to hold a feedback seminar as the research concluded to share final results, and plan to distribute copies of my thesis and/or relevant chapters, to any practitioners who would wish to have a copy.

5.3 Fieldwork phase 1

The first phase of fieldwork is discussed below and covers the mechanics of data collection including: 1) the initial selecting and recruiting of interviewees including efforts made to ensure representation 2) reflections on the interview process itself and the 3) transcribing, coding and analysis stages of fieldwork.

5.3.1 Data collection: recruitment of interviewees

Using the mapping tools, the local peacebuilding expertise of the doctoral research supervisors was consulted to build an initial representative list of fifteen interviewees. The subsequent twenty-five interviewees were referrals from practitioners and selected based on efforts to achieve the greatest degree of overall balance with the aforementioned diversity of actor and sectors represented. In some cases, given that the focus of the research was on individual practitioners rather than types of practice or organisations, decisions were made to prioritise certain individuals and their experiences over gaining the ideal balances.

Furthermore, the practice field in Northern Ireland has fluidity which means that there were practitioners who could have easily fit into multiple categories. This was especially true for those who had been engaged in peacebuilding for the longest amount of time; for example 25 of the 40 interviews (or 62%) had 18+ years experience. Overall, one of the most important aims was to ensure the gender and religious/political/ethnic background were not overly weighted in one direction. On several occasions, recommendations of potential practitioners to interview were made but not taken up if that sector had already a surplus representation in either a particular gender or community background. The following two tables give a breakdown of representation by gender and community background (Table 3) and by sectors of practice, gender, background, region and years in practice (Table 4).

Table 3: **Gender and community background of interviewees**

Female				**Male**			
PUL	***CNR***	***Other/Unknown***	***Total***	***PUL***	***CNR***	***Other/Unknown***	***Total***
6	6	5	17	8	12	3	23

Table 4**: Representation of interviewees**

Sectors: *(Total Interviewed)*	**Gender**	**Background** *(Protestant Catholic/ Other)*	**Geography**	**Years in Practice** *<10 years (Power-sharing) 10-17 years (Post-GFA) 18+ years (Pre-GFA)*
Education and Research: 6	3 (F) 3(M)	3 (PUL) 2 (CNR) 1 (Other)	5 Regional 1 Derry/Londonderry	3 (10-17) 3 (18+)
Economics: 2	2 (M)	1 (C/P) 1 (CNR)	1 Derry/Londonderry 1 Regional	2 (10-17)
Justice and Equality: 3	1 (F) 2 (M)	1 (PUL) 1 (CNR) 1 (Other)	2 Belfast 1 Regional	2 (18+) 1 (10-17)
Community Relations/ Social Cohesion: 3	2 (F) 1 (M)	1 (CNR) 2 (Other)	2 Regional 1 Belfast	2 (18+) 1 (10-17)
Community Development: 4	3 (F) 1 (M)	2 (CNR) 2 (Other)	2 Regional 2 Belfast	4 (18+)

Culture: Media, Arts & Sports: 4	1 (F) 3 (M)	2 (PUL) 2 (CNR)	4 Regional	2 (10-17) 2 (18+)
Contested and Shared Spaces/ Interfaces: 2	1 (F) 1 (M)	2 CNR	2 Belfast	1 (18+) 1 (< 10)
Dealing with the Past (Archival and Storytelling): 2	2 (F)	2 (PUL)	1 Derry/Londonderry 2 Regional	1 (10-17) 1 (18+)
Gender: 1	1 (F)	Unknown	1 Belfast/Regional	18+
Former Combatants: 3	3 (M)	2 (PUL) 1 (CNR)	1 Belfast 1 Lisburn 1 Regional	1 (18+) 2 (10-17)
Funders: 3	2 (M) 1 (F)	3 (CNR)	1 Fermanagh 2 Regional	3 (18+)
Faith-based: 4	2 (F) 2 (M)	3 (PUL) 1 (CNR)	2 Regional 2 Belfast	3 (18+) 1 (10-17)
Victims: 3	3 (M)	2 (CNR) 1 (PUL)	2 Regional 1 Belfast	1 (<10) 2 (+18)

5.3.2 Interviews with practitioners

After being recommended by either the research team or an interviewee, all potential interviewees were contacted initially through email or through direct telephone calls. The purpose of the initial contact was to introduce myself, explain the purpose of the research, and ascertain potential willingness to take part, explaining that initially the first phase would involve being interviewed. Recruitment of interviewees was not overly difficult, particularly once I was able to establish that they had been referred to me by a fellow practitioner, or a member of the research team. Several of the practitioners suggested through snowball sampling were known to me through my own previous practice experiences. Given my background in the field of peacebuilding and the small size of this field in Northern Ireland, it was not surprising that I knew several of my interviewees. On the whole I considered my prior knowledge of the field an asset to the research, however, where possible I only pursued my own contacts when another practitioner had also suggested their name.

Once agreement has been established and an interview time and place agreed, I followed up the contact by sending a research consent form and a subject information sheet. When meeting for an interview, I either travelled to the interviewee at the location of their choice or a mutually agreed upon venue. Each session was recorded with a digital recorder after permission was gained and consent forms signed. Each interview lasted on average 1.5 hours, with the longest lasting just under three hours. I found practitioners eager to talk about their practice experiences, and generous in their time. On one occasion I had to return to the interviewee for a second interview as I realised the battery had died on the recorder. The practitioner was graciously able to accommodate my error. Many practitioners reflected that it was fruitful to talk through experiences of practice, and to consider what they had learned as a result.

After interviews, I took notes of my own impressions of the interview that helped in memo keeping. Each recorded audio file was downloaded onto my own personal laptop and latterly stored securely on University computers.

5.3.3 Transcribing the interviews

Transcribing the audio files was conducted manually for the first 13 interviewees, double checked for accuracy and sent off to interviewees to be verified. The remaining 27 were transcribed professionally located through the University and agreement of confidentiality signed. As I had initially planned to transcribe all interviews myself I contacted all 27 interviewees again to gain permission for their interview to be professionally transcribed. Those interviews that were professionally transcribed once received, were checked again for accuracy and also sent for verification to the interviewees. All transcripts were verified by interviewees, with the exception of four interviewees, three who never responded to their received transcript and one who passed away prior to receiving it. In my correspondence to all interviewees I indicated that if I received no response I would construe they were satisfied with the accuracy of the transcript. However, I have chosen to use minimal direct quotes from any of the transcripts that were not signed off by the interviewee. One interviewee verified the transcript but asked that he not be quoted at all as his work had become too sensitive. Others too asked for minor changes or retractions on information that practitioners felt had become too sensitive to be shared. Given my priority to work collaboratively and transparently, I worked as diligently as possible to respect such wishes.

5.3.4. Coding and analysing the data

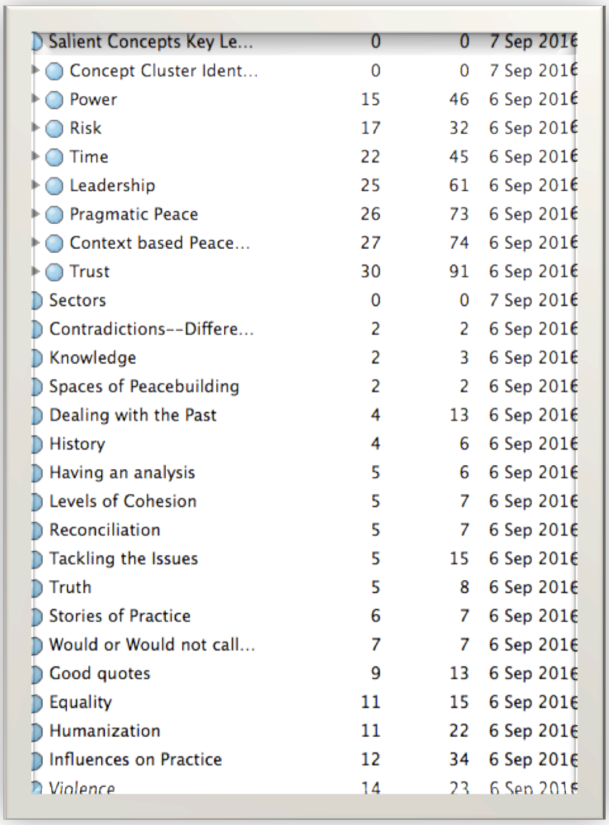
As the research took an inductive approach, in order to code and analyse the data I used a combination of methods influenced by grounded theory and thematic analysis to elicit and examine recurring themes and patterns that emerged from the data. While coding decisions and categories were conducted manually, I used NVivo

software as a tool to organise the coded information and to further aid the data analysis process. Transcripts were coded with both inductively determined analytical codes (which inferred meaning from a passage) and with codes containing topics (i.e. categories of questions). At the initial open coding stage, each line of transcript was read and categorised to represent an idea related to either type of code. As Charmaz describes, during open coding or what she describes as 'initial' coding, researchers:

> "[R]emain open to exploring whatever theoretical possibilities we can discern in the data. This initial step in coding moves us toward later decisions about defining our core conceptual categories" (Charmaz, 2006 p. 116).

Charmaz states that open coding cannot be as absent of pre-conceived ideas as traditional grounded theorists once suggested, but advises to try to remain as open as possible about what the data is suggesting (ibid, p.117). After open coding, further refining process was taken to distil yet again how the initial codes could begin to be aggregated into broader set of ideas and categories. As the research question broadly focused on knowledge gained about change processes for peacebuilding and aspired to build theory, the next set of categories reflected interlinked concepts. I referred to this stage of distillation as axial coding and used it to discern core salient concepts identified frequently in the transcripts that had an overarching thematic relationship to the research. The use of NVivo software enabled me to verify my own insights as to which of my codes indicated possible saliency through either number of references, or the numbers of interviewees coded at any one particular code/node for example, as shown below. The first column represents interviewees and the second the number of references made.

Figure 3: **NVivo Screenshot Axial Coding Stage Salient Concepts and Themes**



Salient Concepts Key Le...	0	0	7 Sep 2016
Concept Cluster Ident...	0	0	7 Sep 2016
Power	15	46	6 Sep 2016
Risk	17	32	6 Sep 2016
Time	22	45	6 Sep 2016
Leadership	25	61	6 Sep 2016
Pragmatic Peace	26	73	6 Sep 2016
Context based Peace...	27	74	6 Sep 2016
Trust	30	91	6 Sep 2016
Sectors	0	0	7 Sep 2016
Contradictions--Differe...	2	2	6 Sep 2016
Knowledge	2	3	6 Sep 2016
Spaces of Peacebuilding	2	2	6 Sep 2016
Dealing with the Past	4	13	6 Sep 2016
History	4	6	6 Sep 2016
Having an analysis	5	6	6 Sep 2016
Levels of Cohesion	5	7	6 Sep 2016
Reconciliation	5	7	6 Sep 2016
Tackling the Issues	5	15	6 Sep 2016
Truth	5	8	6 Sep 2016
Stories of Practice	6	7	6 Sep 2016
Would or Would not call...	7	7	6 Sep 2016
Good quotes	9	13	6 Sep 2016
Equality	11	15	6 Sep 2016
Humanization	11	22	6 Sep 2016
Influences on Practice	12	34	6 Sep 2016
Violence	14	23	6 Sep 2016

As mentioned previously, NVivo software was used to verify my own emerging insights gained through the stages of conducting interviews, transcribing, reviewing, coding and memo writing. Salient themes that might be contenders for theory building with practitioners were written up and discussed with the research team regularly. Several themes became promising and discussed with the research team for their potential for carrying theoretical weight. The top two themes evident within my own manual analysis and verified using NVivo to both track the number of interviewees and references to the code were: 1) **trust** coded to 30/40

interviewees with 91 references, 2) **context-based peacebuilding** coded to 27/40 interviewees and 74 references (to view, see above Figure 3). While either might have been useful for theory building, the initial theme that had been most heavily reflected in the interviews and indicated scope for peacebuilding theory building was that of trust. The trust theme included a constellation of related sub-themes such as transparency, accountability, integrity, credibility and counter-themes such as distrust, mistrust, betrayal, and suspicion. After consultation with the doctoral research supervisors in August 2016, it was determined that trust/distrust was the most salient topic to pursue over the subsequent months with practitioners for theory building. This decision was made due to not only the frequency issues of trust were mentioned but also for their salience as reoccurring themes within stories of practice concerning factors influencing 'success' and 'challenges.'

5.3.5 Preparation for phase 2: matrix building and case study creation

At this stage, another level of analysis was undertaken to begin to conceptualise the relationships that the sub-themes had with the dominant theme. This entailed going back to the original data and the transcripts to pull together all coded material at those related subthemes and review how interviewees spoke about and conceived the inter-relationships of the ideas. In order to aid this process a matrix was developed which sought to identify quotes revealing or indicating trust/distrust dimensions across four levels: individual, community, institutions, and state (see Appendix 10). This layer of analysis was useful in gaining a clearer picture of implicit and explicit ways trust and distrust were understood and being talked about, as well as to begin to visualise its importance to peacebuilding in the eyes of those interviewed. It was also useful to gain insight into the systemic nature of trust/distrust as examples were given which spread across the four domains from individual up to state. Insights gained from the matrix became important in my preparations for laying the groundwork to aid theory building with practitioners.

In addition, several documents were created to work with groups and to serve as discussion tools for phase 2, theory building. Two case studies were developed to use with practitioners in theory-building to generate thinking and discussion. These two case studies were a composite of the types of stories shared during the interviews of practice challenge and success but constructed with the key dimensions of trust/distrust embedded into the story. The purpose of creating the case studies was to allow practitioners to discuss the cases and to discover whether they conceptualised trust/distrust concepts in ways similar congruent with my own groupings (for case-studies see Appendix 11 and 12). Finally, using ideas generated by the trust matrix which I hoped the case studies would elicit, I developed a visual aid of diagrams and definitions of the key concepts as a handout to use to stimulate further discussion (Appendix 13).

5.4 Fieldwork phase 2: theory-building with practitioners

In addition to developing case study and discussion materials, preparation for theory building involved recruitment for participation from the original group of 40 interviewees. To this end, all interviewees were contacted again through email to ascertain who may be interested in taking part. I outlined that involvement would entail meeting together on at least once or possibly twice for two-three hours. There was a strong response from practitioners, with 21/40 indicating that, depending on the time frame involved, they had an interest in participating in theory building. All interested practitioners were contacted again via Doodle, a scheduling application, and three dates were chosen which allowed everyone who had indicated interest a possible date for involvement. By this stage 15 practitioners had confirmed participation. Of the 15 scheduled, several subsequently contacted me to ask to rearrange and attend one of the other three dates, and the three dates were reduced to two with five participants to attend the first session and 10 to attend the second date. In the end, due to cancellations, only one practitioner attended the first theory-building group while nine attended the second scheduled day. On each occasion, meetings lasted roughly 2.5 hours.

In many cases several of the participants knew, or knew of one another. For this reason, prior to beginning the session each participant signed a second confidentiality agreement and agreed to use the Chatham House Rule. I also obtained agreement to record the sessions but highlighted that they would be used primarily for my own reference of the sessions. The structure of the meeting was to spend the greatest amount of time working with the case studies, followed up by the discussion with the handouts that I had developed on emerging themes. The first case-study entitled "Ballykillrural" mimicked several of the challenges evidenced by the data from interviews and the second case-study "Newtowncastle" evidenced more of the dynamics that had been evident in composite ways in practice stories that had met with "success" (again see Appendix 11 and 12).

The discussion questions asked each group to consider change barriers, how they had or had not been overcome, what might happen next, and what learning the case might have generated. Finally, if positive changes had occurred, they were asked what they believed might have been most important in encouraging such changes. As mentioned previously, the purpose was to use the discussion to determine whether patterns identified were linked conceptually by practitioners in ways similar to each other and to my own analysis. Discussion was aided by the presence of a white board and, as participants reflected, I was able to take notes of the discussion. I later photographed each white board to track what themes the discussion generated (for one example see Appendix 14).

5.4.1 Challenges and practicalities of working with theory building groups

Reflecting on how initial planning for this stage was executed, several observations can be made. My wish was to work with the groups in a democratic approach and adopt what John Heron describes as a model of "co-operative inquiry." He writes about this approach:

> "[E]veryone gets into the experience and action that is being explored; everyone is involved in making sense and drawing conclusions; thus everyone involved can take initiative and exert influence on the process…The inquiry group members work together through cycles of action and

> reflection, developing their understanding and practice by engaging in what we have called an 'extended epistemology' of experiential, presentational, propositional and practical ways of knowing" (Heron and Reason, 2008 p.366)

Initially I imagined that my own practical facilitation skills would prepare me to engage in groupwork using the initial salient themes and concepts that had emerged. While the co-inquiry model was theoretically compatible with my research aims, practically it presented difficulties. One such difficulty was that I recognised there was a need to introduce the salient findings but do so in a way that would allow the group to interact with the concepts for themselves. However, I also knew time was precious. I was conscious that practitioners were participating voluntarily, and I wanted the experience not to be wasteful for either them or for the purpose of the research.

The decision to use case studies to generate discussion came after I realised an open ended-conversation may have the above drawbacks. In a conversation with another academic, however, the suggestion was made to write a fictional case study and embed the concepts within. The case studies could then be a springboard for discussion. This became a more useful tool than I had initially anticipated. It created a live case with which to engage and which ultimately became useful to demonstrate the thinking and judgment practitioners used to make decisions. Likewise it also highlighted the different contexts and subsequent frames of interpretation and analysis practitioners applied to their practice.

The aspiration to work elicitively and democratically was also impacted by group dynamics in theory-building groups. While each meeting generated fruitful discussion they also presented challenges. There was a contrast between the two sessions held, in one meeting while four were anticipated, only one participant attended. It therefore, in some respect took the form of an interactive interview. The second group was well attended with nine attendees, which was, in retrospect, too large a group. As a result it required a need to manage those who were more talkative in order to hear from everyone equally.

It is possible that all of these challenges would have been worked out if we had met again as was originally planned. However, as the next section describes, theory-building sessions were truncated at this stage.

5.4.2 Shift of focus towards the epistemology of phronesis

Charmaz writes of working with research data as the process of entering an "interactive space," and that going deep into the data can "challenge your earlier preconceptions and hunches. See what you can learn" (Charmaz, 2006 p. 116). Richards offers similar advice for qualitative researchers:

> "[T]here is no imperative for the qualitative researcher that the design or approach should be constant throughout the project…[t]he tools of the qualitative trade are often developed with such feedback loops as the project develops. Adjusting the research approach is entirely proper, and some adjustment is usually required" (Richards, 2009 p.84).

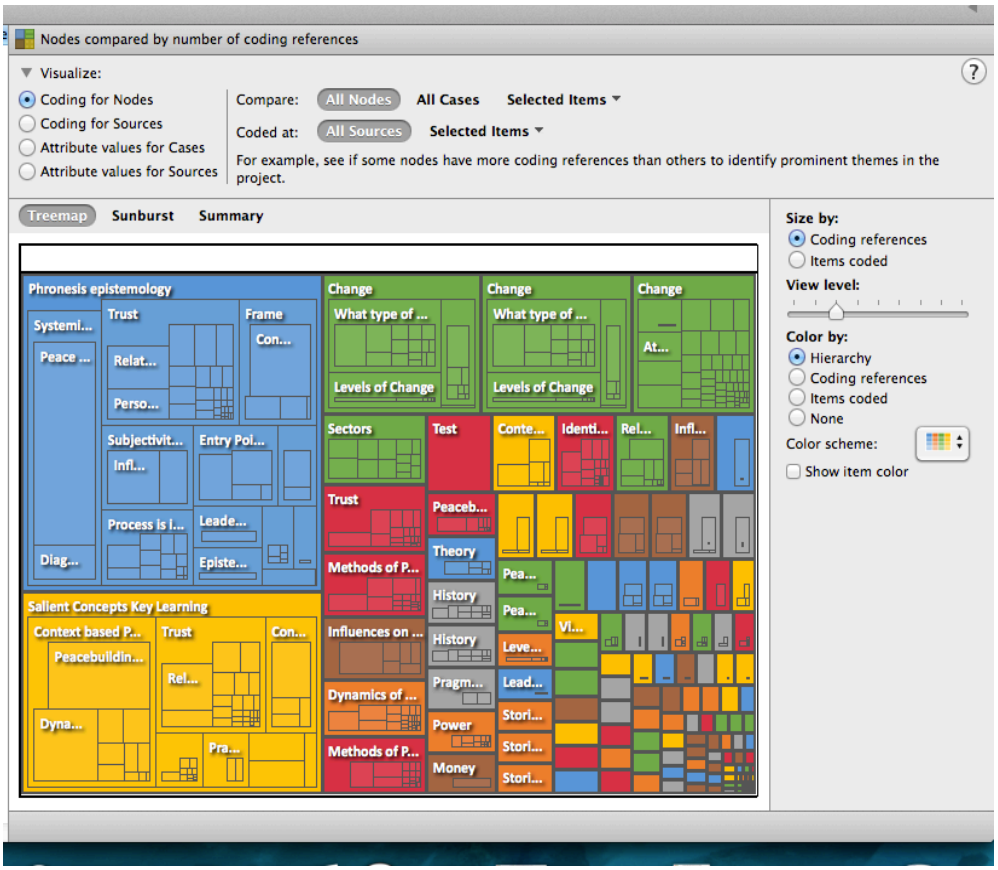
Such advice accurately reflects my experience of this research process, particularly as it moved from the end of phase 1 into the start of phase 2. As mentioned previously, during phase 1 data collection coding and analysis had highlighted two significant themes emerging from the grounded inductive approach that broadly addressed the research question concerning what practitioners had learned through practice about peacebuilding social change processes. This was 1) the importance of building trust within change processes; and 2) the primacy of context and context-knowledge for ensuring relevancy and to facilitate change. Initial decisions had been made to pursue the first theme of trust building for theory-building and further data analysis undertaken to support this decision.

However, the overlapping combination of further data analysis, writing and conceptual thinking were to shift the direction away from this initial research design after the beginning of phase 2 theory building. Directly influencing this shift were insights gained during the process of writing when considering and exploring the theoretical basis for the concept of phronesis. Given that the term had not been used in any significant manner in conjunction with peacebuilding, conceptualising

the term was necessary. However, as I began to conceptualise phronesis and write about it describing it as *judgment-in-context-for-action, an embedded and embodied form of knowledge gained from experience which included tacit and explicit recognition of patterns of context,* examples that illustrated the concept surfaced naturally within the data. Furthermore, conceptualising phronesis began to shed light on the second most salient theme context-based peacebuilding, demonstrating why it was so important to 'success' and relevancy for change processes in local peacebuilding.

Furthermore when reflecting on group discussions, and re-reading transcripts of theory-building sessions, I found additional evidence of what might be termed 'phronetic' knowledge and how such thinking influenced particular choices in peacebuilding amongst the practitioners. In sum, greater conceptual clarity of phronesis increased my own insights about civil-society peacebuilding and demonstrated an explanatory power. Viewing phronesis as a lens of analysis also produced insights on two interrelated and interdependent aspects of peacebuilding I had not previously considered: **practitioners' judgment** (decision-making gained from experience and embedded knowledge) and **context** (defined here as knowledge and understanding of patterns in context: place-space, relationships, time/timing, and frame). In conclusion, phronesis, once conceptualised, became a lens that allowed me to view and analyse the data in a new way, helped to explain salient themes, and provided illuminating insights that served to more broadly answer the research question. The diagram below illustrates in colour that phronesis as a conceptual term was aggregated with most number of codes, and visually illustrates in part why this decision was taken.

Figure 4: **Screenshot of phronesis as most aggregated concept**



After discussions were held with the research team, a decision was made to shift the research design to allow for greater exploration of phronesis as a concept for peacebuilding. To this end, all theory-building group participants were contacted and informed of the shift in direction in the research in order to keep them informed and to thank them for their participation thus far. At this stage phase 2 was concluded and the writing-up period commenced.

Conclusion

Having begun the research from the outset with the intention to build theory with practitioners the decision to shift and focus instead on conceptualising phronesis was not entirely easy. I had found the first explorations with the theory-building groups to be fruitful and stimulating. It also occurred to me that there was a danger that I had created expectations for the group of practitioners that I was not able to fulfil. For both these reasons I was reluctant to truncate the group theory building, and I ruefully compared the decision to having two children but that one had to be put up one for adoption. Metaphors aside, it had become clear to me that if I could present a strong argument in conceptualising phronesis then it may pave the way for practitioners to become more routinely and regularly prioritised in knowledge production practices. Therefore, while I was reluctant to set-aside the theory building, I considered that in doing so, I could also build a stronger case for substantive collaborative theory building with practitioners in the future. The next chapter progresses that aim by illustrating the concept of phronesis as it surfaced in the data from interviews as an epistemology of practice and an important knowledge-source which practitioners used and relied upon to know how to influence social change processes.

Chapter 6: Phronesis as an epistemology of practice in Northern Ireland

Introduction

Fieldwork research and analysis of the interviews generated four findings that are correlated and interdependent. The first finding is the existence of phronesis as an epistemology of practice in Northern Ireland. This finding is importantly linked to the second finding, that phronesis, or practical wisdom is evidenced as a significant epistemology which influences peacebuilding actors' judgement in their efforts to effect social change processes. The third finding which links to the previous two, is that practitioners in their efforts to promote peacebuilding social changes, use phronesis and the deep context knowledge it contains, to navigate, enhance, lever and lubricate change processes on the ground. In particular, practitioners described building trust and behaviours that demonstrated trustworthiness were catalytic to progressing change. These three findings, correlated and interdependent, support the fourth finding, which is the significance of identifying phronesis as a concept important to gain a deeper understanding of peacebuilding practice located at the grassroots and within civil society in Northern Ireland.

The aim of Chapter 6 and Chapter 7 is to introduce the data and demonstrate how it serves to substantiate these four findings. Chapter 6 will begin by briefly outlining the two salient inductive themes that emerged during the analysis of research fieldwork - context and trust. The importance of these themes, however, became clearer in light of the conceptual development of phronesis which adds explanation to their salience. For this reason, the remainder of Chapter 6 will focus on demonstrating the existence of phronesis as an epistemology of practice, and its significance as a form of judgment for peacebuilding practice. It will do this by focusing on phronesis as a way of knowing and learning, and as containing nuanced context-knowledge.

Chapter 7 will build upon the data provided in Chapter 6 to evidence the finding that practitioners in their efforts to promote peacebuilding social changes use phronesis and the deep context knowledge it contains, to navigate, enhance, lever

and lubricate change processes on the ground. In particular the importance of trust building and the demonstration of trustworthiness are discussed as key to catalysing change processes. Chapter 7 moves towards the conclusion by reflecting on tensions described by practitioners using a phronetic epistemology of practice and ends by drawing on the evidence from both chapters to substantiate the fourth finding that phronesis is conceptually important in order to gain a deeper understanding of grassroots and civil society peacebuilding practice in Northern Ireland.

6.1 Salient themes emerging from the interview data: context and trust

The importance of using context-knowledge in promoting change

As stated, two salient themes emerged inductively from the fieldwork and the interview data analysis that speak to what has been learned about change processes from peacebuilding practice experience. The first theme, coded as context, refers to the primacy given to knowledge gained by experience (phronesis), and its use to build context-knowledge in order to promote social change, rather than theory (episteme) or technique (techne). Explicitly named by practitioners and demonstrated implicitly in their transcripts, in the open coding stage of analysis, 27 of 40 (67%) of interviewees made 72 references to context and demonstrated that context-knowledge was important to practice. Context-knowledge gained by personal experience was deemed important to orient practitioners and also used to explain formative influences on practice. This included personal motivations for involvement in peacebuilding, as well as a rationale for their interpretation of the possibilities for change. The importance afforded to context-knowledge to progress social change was particularly evident in stories of practice. For example, at times by adopting contextually relevant pragmatic approaches in order to implement peacebuilding on the ground. At times this was through incentivising or appealing to self-interest, finding areas of common concern or using levers or hooks that generated motivation and buy-in for peacebuilding. Context-knowledge was viewed

as a means of ensuring ownership, maximising relevancy and considered necessary for impact.

Trust and trustworthiness as change catalysts

One of the research objectives was to determine if there were factors within peacebuilding initiatives that practitioners might identify as important to 'catalysing change.' The research findings indicated that peacebuilding social change has been most effective when practitioners have navigated context effectively. In Northern Ireland, illustrated both explicitly in transcripts of interviewees and embedded implicitly in their stories, evidence from this research suggests practice is embedded in a context of deep systemic distrust, and as a result, navigating this distrust by engendering *trust* and/or being perceived as *trustworthy* were considered important to catalyse change processes. The importance of trust was spoken about explicitly by 30 of the 40 interviewees (75%) with over 91 references. Trustworthiness was also evidenced in stories of practice, and linked to concepts such as accountability, transparency, credibility, and integrity. The research analysis indicated that it was important that both practitioners and the processes of peacebuilding of which they are associated were perceived as trustworthy, as both were associated with facilitating change. This was true across the spectrum of sectors with eleven of thirteen sectors of practice reflecting that demonstrations of trustworthiness and engendering trust was important to practice, the only two practice sectors who did not rate trust as important were those involved in gender-focused peacebuilding practice and funders. Trust and behaviours associated with trustworthiness featured particularly strong among practice sectors associated with former combatants, social cohesion, contested spaces, community development and faith-based peacebuilding. The overall importance of this salient theme of trust will be addressed in Chapter 7 which outlines how phronesis is used by practitioners to promote social change.

6.2 Evidence of phronesis as an epistemology of practice

The aim of the remainder of this chapter is to demonstrate the existence of phronesis and its evidence as a primary epistemology of practice among those interviewed. As previously stated, its presence adds explanatory power to the data in relation to the two salient themes, context and trust. I have structured my analysis using the five dimensions of phronesis which I have conceptualised in chapter 3. Phronetic knowledge is recapped as knowledge which is: *experienced, embodied*, *organically developed through experimentation, holds tacit recognition of context patterns*, and *demonstrates context-relational judgments*. These five dimensions will be evidenced under two broader headings phronetic ways of knowing and learning (Section 6.2.1) and phronesis as nuanced context-knowledge (Section 6.3).

6.2.1 Phronetic ways of knowing and learning

Phronesis, or practical wisdom, as I have conceptualised here draws heavily from and values knowledge gained from accumulated experiences that create pattern recognition over time. Learning is generated through experience navigating uncertain and complex contexts using organic experimentation, or trial and error approaches. When reading and navigating the context multiple forms of 'knowing' are employed in order to recognise patterns of context, using an integration of both subjective and objective experiences. This embodied knowing recognises gut instincts, bodily sensations, affective experiences, and resists mind-body dualisms. When there is little experience, others who are considered to have similar contexts may be sought out and used as exemplars, as the most trustworthy source of knowledge within a phronetic epistemology are those with shared common experiences. Finally, viewing practice as organic and context as fluid, value is attributed to action even if outside of, or not easily quantifiable under, techno-rational paradigms or metrics of measurability. These dimensions are demonstrated in the data below as phronetic ways of knowing and learning.

Gained by experience

When asked to first reflect on how they became involved in peacebuilding, the majority of interviewees, with the exception of those not originally from Northern Ireland, were able to trace their involvement to being either directly or indirectly affected by growing up or living in the context of conflict in Northern Ireland. One practitioner noted:

> "My mum had two brothers that were involved in the conflict in the Republican movement and spent considerable amounts of time in jail and my grandmother's house would have been the target of the British Army, and so my mum would have been there, would have grown up around that home in a neighbourhood that that was the context of which we grew up" (Practitioner 29, Victims Sector, Interviewed 15/5/15).

Six interviewees described a direct impact, with three describing themselves as involved in combatant or paramilitary affiliated roles, while three interviewees identified themselves as either a victim of direct violence, or having a lost a close relative as a result of the Troubles. For the ex-combatants, each saw their involvement in peacebuilding as part of an evolution of the conflict transformation process that began with their involvement in ex-prisoner groups but extended beyond into community development, restorative justice, local community politics, and efforts at reintegration or reconciliation. One in particular saw his work as an outgrowth of his Republican politics and commitment to the end of an armed stage of conflict. Still others articulated it as a logical reflection of their organising skills and previous combatant leadership roles, commenting:

> "You naturally have leaders within communities…. there are shepherds and sheep. [I]t was just the next stage of the process, you know, the military armed process had ended….So you know, you had natural leaders, the people that were educated people but didn't have formal education…I was a great organiser in a conflict situation, so I am a naturally good organiser….but I transferred my organisational skills into a conflict transformation remit. [S]o those skills that I had then, I transferred them into a peace setting" (Practitioner 8, Loyalist Ex-Combatant interviewed 12/2/15).

> "I suppose when I came out of prison. Looking around me thinking like what is there for our community, what has the community achieved, what do they need to achieve….And I would be listening to people, I drove a taxi for a

> while so I was listening to them and things had changed, and I wasn't in prison for a long time, only for a few years but people were talking about they needed their bins emptied, stuff like that" (Practitioner 38, Restorative Justice, Interviewed 16/6/15).

Those who described their involvement in peacebuilding as having originated or intersected with their experiences of being victims either through bereavement or injury reflected that it was one of the primary motivating factors, but not a straightforward path. For example, one interviewee, a Protestant whose spouse had been killed by the PIRA, articulated that in hindsight their peacebuilding had begun with volunteer work in a local faith-based organisation in Republican and Nationalist areas prior to the death. However, for this interviewee bereavement halted this involvement due to the difficulty of facing members of the Republican community after the PIRA claimed responsibility for the death. The interviewee described a chance meeting later with one young person known from this voluntary work whose previous friendship had opened their eyes to the experiences of young Nationalists and Republicans. At the chance meeting, this young man offered condolences, but also justification for the death. The interviewee described this as a blow:

> "He came over and first of all said look, sorry to hear about [your spouse] and I said yeah and he said do you want to join us to sit down and have a burger and then he sat and basically justified the bomb and it was really, really hard to hear and this was like a week after the bombing" (Practitioner 25, Victims Sector, Interviewed 8/5/2015).

This interviewee went on to describe a number of the different twists and turns on their path towards peacebuilding. This was not a straightforward, and at times fraught with cognitive dissonance; trying to reconcile previous experiences of friendships with Republicans with the death of a spouse killed by the PIRA. However for another interviewee from the victims' sector, learning that his own brother had been killed by the police under suspicious circumstances- strengthened, solidified and took the work they had already begun to address structural violence issues into new directions. This personal loss further motivated their pursuit of community-based human rights and victims oriented advocacy. Three others from the Catholic/Nationalist/Republican background in particular spoke of being the victim

of discrimination and structural injustices in the workplace as part of their conflict related experiences that had some impact on their own practice.

While perhaps more indirectly impacted by the conflict, eleven interviewees reflected on formative experiences of specific events that led them in different ways towards their involvement in peacebuilding practice. Specific temporal turning point events such as the Civil Rights era were cited as an important time of political awakening. One Nationalist interviewee at age of eleven was present at Bloody Sunday. This practitioner described the experience as pivotal both personally and for the city, articulating that everything had changed that day. In later years, this practitioner held jobs that brought him into regular and close contact with the army and police, giving him new insights into the Protestant community. Such experiences were cited as important and considered helpful in later life when this practitioner was involved in negotiating parading disputes.

The 1981 Hunger Strikes were another significant formative experience for some. One practitioner reflected on the experience of being in school with the brother of a hunger striker, describing the lack of acknowledgement by school officials that his classmate's brother was dying. This practitioner now creates digital arts programmes for schools in order to address the history of the Troubles:

> "There is a hunger striker's brother sitting beside me, do you know what I mean? But this isn't really happening… officially. We talked about it in the playground….He is sitting near me and everyday I am coming in and thinking 'your brother is getting closer and closer to death' " (Practitioner 1, Arts-based, Interviewed 27/11/14).

For some it was discriminatory experiences that impacted their practice approaches. Two interviewees recounted personal experiences of discrimination and intimidation. One, an ex-prisoner who now works within a Republican-based restorative justice project reflected on a pivotal experience he had as a young person which had left him determined never to "be ignorant" to anyone regardless of their background. Recalling his first job as a delivery-boy, he was told by a Protestant co-worker that he was not allowed to take his tea break with colleagues, but instead expected to take it in the store cupboard. This experience motivated him

in the ways he worked with others, whether that be when partnering with Loyalist organisations, or when forging relationships with both police and statutory agencies:

> "I won't be sitting drinking my tea in a cupboard. But it had a profound effect on me… I think from that I learnt, I probably didn't even think about learning it but if I was in a room and was making tea in any circumstances or anywhere no matter who was there, should it be the devil himself…. you can fight with them, you can kill each other and all that but if you're in a room you can't be ignorant, you just can't be, you can put your position out and stuff like that but you can do it still without being discourteous" (Practitioner 38, Restorative Justice, Interviewed 16/6/15).

By contrast, one-third of interviewed practitioners traced their initial involvement in peacebuilding practice as a means of professional employment. Interestingly, some of those younger practitioners who described their entry point into practice as beginning with employment stated that though they hadn't necessarily trained or planned to become involved in peacebuilding, it had, to quote one practitioner, "gotten under their skin" (Practitioner 9, Sports-based peacebuilding, Interviewed 20/2/15).

As one younger practitioner described the work helped make sense of her own childhood experiences:

> "No real other background in the work bar just when I came into the post. Sometimes you can feel a bit bad about that because it wasn't like a burning thing that I followed from a kid or anything. But saying that, I always was aware of conflict as many people were, particularly living in South Armagh and there's all the helicopters and the police and everything that goes with that, and just like not understanding it or wondering why, and just the news. I remember the news always being like very, (pause) I suppose you might say influential in the stories it carried and you would pick up on what your parents would say and stuff about the news and God, not again, not again, not again, you know. And it just was like what the hell is going on" (Practitioner 30, Education/ Schools, Interviewed 15/ 5/ 15).

Another younger practitioner, described that having a career in 'community relations' was not something that had been emphasised in their grammar school education, and it wasn't until they had met other practitioners that they realised it was an option. This is not surprising considering that the opportunities to earn a wage in peacebuilding in Northern Ireland primarily arrived in the last twenty years, as the sector

professionalised and funds made more readily available to support regular employment.

Models and exemplars as trustworthy sources of knowledge

Interviewees were asked to reflect on how they learned to 'do peacebuilding?' In addition to lived experience, the broadest category of responses focused on relational influences such as important people and organisations, including both locals and outsiders that became mentors, models or exemplars. Likewise, some cited the influence of the role modelling of parents who made deliberate decisions to form relationships with those from other traditions. One interviewee whose father was a minister involved in ecumenism recalled: "I always kind of joked that if there weren't pickets outside church I thought we were doing something wrong" (Practitioner 21, Archival and Storytelling, interviewed 24/4/15). Another interviewee involved in human rights advocacy, cited the influence of hearing stories about discrimination faced by his parents from a 'mixed-marriage' who found themselves unable to visit relatives or family members and whose extended family were targeted regularly for security force raids. Such experiences played a shaping role in the awareness of the raw issues of structural violence and prejudice.

Roughly one-third of those interviewed named *specific* people and/or organisations as important in shaping their peacebuilding ideas and practice. These included those who were considered 'local' and 'international.' Local Individuals named as having influenced their practice were spoken of as inspirational for their vision, commitment, skill and know-how. Specific faith-based leaders named were Alec Reid, Harold Good and Eric Gallagher, and Ray Davey and John Morrow from the Corrymeela Community. Organisations were also cited as exemplars: Community Relations in Schools (CRIS), St. Columb's Park House in Derry, 174 Trust, The Spirit of Enniskillen, Clonard Monastery, and Cornerstone Community were all cited as examples of places supporting the growth of peacebuilding practice. Interviewees described being mentored by watching others:

> "They were the two great gurus of that time and John Morrow, people like that, Eric Gallagher who was my minister, those were the people who inspire you. Because I mean Eric went to Feakle you know, and I think they're the sort of people who model but also they show you how to do things, you know, there was nothing like sitting down with Ray [Davey] and he'd sit down and he'd talk to you like you were the most important person in the world and then he'd send you off to do something and you wouldn't realise it. And those, certainly experiences in Corrymeela in the early days, I mean there was so much learning there" (Practitioner 17, Education/Research, Interviewed 16/4/15).

> "Father Alec became identified with…enabling dialogue where there was none, enabling political dialogue where politics had broken down and that's a role of the church as well and it's not its professional role but it happened to be here a very important role because of the stalemates" (Practitioner 37, Faith-based, Interviewed 15/6/15).

Several interviewees also spoke of local academics that were involved in hands-on ways within practice in community relations, peacebuilding, and community development work. For example one interviewee specifically recalled being mentored by John Malone, an educational reformer who pioneered peacebuilding in schools in the early 1970s, while others spoke of researchers involved with Ulster University's International Conflict Research Institute (INCORE).

Roughly one quarter of interviewees spoke of influential international peacebuilders that had come to spend time in Northern Ireland, describing them as individuals who either brought insights, skills or external perspectives that were useful to practitioners. For example, academic and peace practitioners such as John Paul Lederach, Brian Currin (a South African lawyer involved with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission), Roel Kaptein (a Dutch Girardian-influenced theologian who had worked extensively with Corrymeela) and Steve Wessler (an American anti-bias educator), were all spoken of as useful outsiders who brought a helpful lens of analysis to local practice. International organisations such as The Arbinger Institute, The Mastery Foundation, and Interaction Associates were also named by practitioners as providing useful conceptual frameworks to draw upon at various times. These relationships provided opportunities to reflect on practice with helpful outsiders selected by the practitioner to play a mentoring role:

> "Obviously, Interaction Associates has a massive impact on my practice and you know, what they do was, after we finished the training for about two years, they rang me once a month from America, and talked through with me for about half an hour, forty-five minutes just about my practice and what I was doing" (Practitioner 2, Interface-based, Interviewed 4/12/2014).

Two practitioners spoke of the opportunity to spend time internationally and to learn about other conflict areas and peacebuilding models. Observing other approaches to practice gave a framework for one practitioner to rethink how the model would need to ensure local relevancy with grassroots communities:

> "I think the opportunity to work abroad and to see there are international models of practice that has resonance here, the key to it I think is just not to parachute them in, but to take the principles and the theories and adapt them or indigenise them into this setting, so it's not just about transferring an American model or a South African model or whatever, it's about seeing what works here and then ultimately I do think it becomes indigenous to here, you begin to use the theories, use the principles but the practice is shaped around local culture" (Practitioner 24, Restorative Justice, Interviewed 5/4/15).

While international experiences or inputs were cited as useful, the data revealed that external individuals were invited in, with learning exchanges initiated by the local practitioners, thus locally owned rather than imposed. This point is particularly important in light of the current academic debates about local knowledge versus outside intervention discussed in Chapter 2. This research found it was important that interviewees were able to choose their own exemplars determined by what was important in their own context to maximise relevancy. It suggests that such intervention can be helpful if it sought out by those holding local context-knowledge, and if due regard and credit if given to those who have the local context-knowledge for its priority.

Embodied ways of knowing

Describing what had influenced and guided their approaches across a variety of circumstances the language respondents used spoke of subjective perceptions, intuition, gut reactions and a degree of 'instinctively' knowing. This demonstrated a much more embodied epistemology which was tacitly used a source of

knowledge-an innate pre-conceptual way of knowing what to do. Over a third of interviewees (16/40) used the words instinctive, gut instincts, or referred to intuitive processes when describing decision-making about practice choices:

> "So all this messy, again, all the process started just as a mess and it's not that you go from any, you go to affect change and it's almost instinctive I suppose to anything that's a definitive roadmap" (Practitioner 14, Community Regeneration Sector, Interviewed 9/4/14).

> "Would I have called that peacebuilding? Certainly not at the time, I would have just seen that as community development work. In terms of a theoretical base for that sorta stuff, I mean it was always really gut reaction to try and look at the bigger picture not to be involved but see really what potential you could have to make a difference maybe for the lives of young people there. Um, not in any kind of missionary way, just as a gut response to what was going on at the time" (Practitioner 3, Community Development Interviewed 8/12/14).

> "[O]ften in strange circumstances or in uncertain circumstances or just as people make new relationships, your feet or your body moves first often in these new directions and your head follows and I think that makes sense for me, a lot of work of reconciliation I would say probably a lot of us we did things and then made sense of it… For me looking back, I mean our human condition knows about unease and dis-ease, maybe we obviously get that from bad relationships we've been part of, if we're relational beings and we've been brought up in relationships that have harmed us we will carry that unease or dis-ease around with us but I think it's more than that. There's something about the human condition that wants to be in equilibrium that wants to be in balance, there's something about our gut, I suppose I'm only learning a bit about that now" (Practitioner 39, Education/Research, Interviewed 16/6/15).

An interviewee whose work with an NGO dedicated to dealing with conflict legacy issues described how their approach for creating space for dialogue evolved in similarly natural and instinctive directions. The group intentionally sought to draw in a diverse range of perspectives for informal roundtable discussions; however, as dialogue unfolded suspicion and anxiety was evident as many did not want to be in the same room with those who were viewed as former enemies. A decision was made to directly address the sources of the suspicion head-on. The practitioner referred to this approach as, "being in the room with the coats on"meaning that there was open acknowledgment that participants were distrustful of one another. When asked about how the interviewee 'knew' this was the right approach, their

response illustrated that decision-making was influenced by instincts about how best to manage the distrust in the room:

> "So I think (pause), I don't know, but I would imagine it arrived as the first difficulty was they didn't want to be in the room together and they named why, so it was almost they kind of said I don't want to be in the room with his coat or her coat, so that was where we began… [W]e actually said ok, let's look at each of these coats…and that just became how we did stuff…[Its] not shutting down when somebody says terrorist campaign or war…and somebody else in the room says that's not what we call it, and the kind of natural instinct by everybody is to say ok, let's move on. And I think part of what we're about is about saying why, you know, why? Why are you getting so annoyed about that word, why are you insisting on the use of that word? So there is something about opening up the dark corners as they appear… It's not about running round going oh there's a dark corner, let's poke into it! But it's about oh hang on a minute…we've hit a bump in the road, let's look at the bump" (Practitioner 21, Storytelling and Archival Sector, Interviewed 24/4/15).

This quote illustrates how the practitioner's instinct is used both to navigate the tacit knowledge about rule crossing (the instinct is to avoid) but also as a guide about what might also dispel the anxiety-naming the distrust. It also illustrates a counter-hegemonic approach by deliberately talking about something that natural instincts (or tacit knowledge) might have told them to ignore. However, the navigation of this line is pursued subtly and instinctively, not to provoke matters by "poking into dark corners" but allowing them to emerge naturally and addressing them. It also highlights the unplanned way this approach of "being in the room with the coats on" developed. By being responsive in the particular moment and paying attention to process, a new approach was stimulated.

Learning through organic development and experimentation

While a third of interviewees articulated that their own lived experience and subjective knowledge had directly influenced their approaches, there was also a strong emphasis on learning 'on the job,' or having stumbled into peacebuilding. Those articulating the importance of learning 'on the job' spoke of the developmental nature of their practice rather than a strategic or technical (techne) or theoretical (episteme) conceptualisation. For example, one practitioner involved

in the early days of restorative justice which had emerged in the late 1990's, described:

> "I became involved in terms of the origin of [Restorative Justice] and we didn't know what we were going to call it and we didn't know nothing about restorative practices when we started out. So you were sort of going along and learning this on the hoof" (Practitioner 38, Interviewed 16/6/15).

Speaking of early work in communities in 1969, one community development practitioner (a term the practitioner stated had not been conceptualised at that stage) described learning on the job in the context of a growing conflict:

> "Now, it wasn't co-ordinated at all but at the end of those nights, I found myself up with other people trying to de-escalate riots and we formed a youth group in Ballymurphy. There [were] some key figures….[a] community infrastructure was slowly building. I think one of the things that I developed very quickly was the sense that networks were important, then I didn't call them networks, but a sense that there was a space that hadn't been colonised, that most things were sectarian and they were increasingly becoming so" (Practitioner 23, Community Development, Interviewed 30/4/15).

While this practitioner was speaking about the context of the development of his practice in the late sixties, 'learning on the job' was also evident within more recent stories of practice. Approaches were shaped not by technique or theory but what worked. One practitioner involved in ex-combatant dialogue and interface conflict management described his own style of practice with the phrase, "in your face approach" which he described as being upfront and directly tackling conflict issues head-on. Learning about what worked necessitated experimentation and was shaped in response to need. In some cases the need was clear-cut, for example- to address and respond to prevent interface violence- but the best method for doing so less clear. For one practitioner, the originator of the idea of the mobile network, this was a practical means to increase communication across a conflict prone interface. For others, responding to need was described as a more organic, chaotic or messy process that defied any pre-planned templates or steps to success:

> "[W]e didn't know what we were doing, we began chaotically, people out there will say [organisation] are brilliant, they knew we needed to deal with

> the past 14 years before the rest of us and I was here from the beginning and I didn't know" (Practitioner 21 Archival and Storytelling Sector, Interviewed 24/4/15).

A theatre-based practitioner readily described her approach as entirely organic- an unplanned approach that often achieved relevancy beyond her own expectations. To illustrate this point, she recalled that she had created a theatre piece addressing global issues of discrimination against homosexuality. Serendipitously, the production began at the same time as a local case of discrimination emerged in the headlines, and marriage equality legislation began to emerge in the Republic of Ireland:

> "Given the local, national and international context I couldn't have timed the production better to maximise impact. Like if somebody had said to me 3 years ago why don't you do 'The Ballad of Reading Jail' in 2015, there's no way I'd have known the Asher cake thing was going to happen, there's no way that I'd have known the same sex marriage referendum was going to happen…. So I now had a piece of theatre that had such pertinence and such relevance only because I was receptive to it. Do you know what I mean? I mean it's not that it's any great plan" (Practitioner 31, Theatre-based, Interviewed 26/5/15).

Organic approaches, as this example illustrates, were viewed as less mechanistic and more trustworthy sources of knowledge to draw from to enhance relevancy. Several practitioners articulated discomfort or ambivalence of template approaches that might be viewed as 'having an agenda,' or that might take a reductionist approach to the complexities of conflict transformation:

> "I think sometimes it's largely by example that people, people seeing it working or they get involved in it and pick up the lessons themselves and become a bit more interested in it and it develops that way. I suppose I am always wary a wee bit about how, you know, the theory of what worked at this will become the sort of 'five easy steps to end conflict' in another situation" (Practitioner 7, Republican Ex-Combatant, Interviewed 9/2/15).

An organic approach was more responsive according to practitioners as it was difficult to know whether one might take the same approach from one situation to the next as the context may have changed:

> "[I]t's all about you knowing the temperature of your group, kind of where your group are and what the next logical step for them is and to constantly just keep pushing them in the right direction. So I would be reluctant to have a resource around here's a 6-week community relations programme, you take your little sectarian bigots at the start and by the end they'll be wonderfully huggy and all this kind of stuff. Put this in at the start and they come out at the end, because each group needs to move at its own pace" (Practitioner 26, Youth /Faith sector, Interviewed 11/5/15).

> "I only know how we are going to start the meeting tonight, I don't know what else I am going to do with it. But I will know when I am there…[Its] to know the difference between playing Irish traditional music on the fiddle and playing classical violin. So the classical violin is to have the musical score, they will be able to read music, they understand the theory. Now, they have art in it of course because they still have to play it, like. But they are following the score, whereas the traditional fiddler is playing from somewhere in there (pointing to heart) there is no sheet music with them, it's like playing jazz it's very extemporaneous. Listen to the other and you... and that's my, very much my approach to mediation, now it's not the only approach, but it's more of how I have done it" (Practitioner 4, Mediation interviewed 8/12/2014).

While lived experience and learning on the job was highlighted as important, it is not to say that this left a completely atheoretical articulation of practice. In fact, a third of the interviewees spoke of attending third level education and at least four interviewees held doctorates. With few exceptions, formal codified theory (episteme) was largely absent from discussions about practice influences. However, other interviewees saw a disconnection between theory and practice, viewing theory as describing something already being done but being made unnecessarily inaccessible and complex:

> "I've done my master's obviously and studied different methodologies…and I have to say to you most of them I've forgotten about. I've read John Paul Lederach's book… my goodness, that's what I was studying – I've never put that stuff into practice (laughs)… [M]aybe I do need to get more time for theories and all that kind of stuff. Part of me kind of kicks against that as well, if I'm being honest with you because I kind of think that you can, what's the word, make something very complex which is really not very complex… I think the academics and that sort get their hands on stuff then everything becomes a method, a theory, do you know what I mean? And I kind of wonder was it ever really meant to be that difficult?" (Practitioner 25, Victims Sector, Interviewed 8/5/2015).

> "I'm not sure, for example, whether people who are involved in cross-community work read much practice or read much theory, or know much-even. A lot of the stuff that I suppose is called theory, when you look at it-

> you think I do that. [I]t's not as if they're taking the theory and they're applying it and saying oh look, that contact theorist said this and he said this is the way to resolve conflict and I'm going to take guidance from him and allow him to direct my practice- I don't think there's very much of that, but I do think for example, when workers go on courses or they familiarise themselves with theories go aye, I do that, yeah I do that, that's something I do, I just don't call it that- I don't have that academic word to call it that there but that's something I do" (Practitioner 28, Interface-based, Interviewed 14/5/15.)

Exceptions included those who had used particular theorist or theorists to inform their conflict analysis or peacebuilding, and in these cases theory and practice where equally emphasised. For example, one practitioner spoke of reading Gandhi and Martin Luther King's writings on non-violence as inspiration. Paolo Freire was also mentioned by two practitioners involved with prison education as influencing their ideas about education and for deconstructing the links between power and oppression. Three interviewees, all members of the Corrymeela Community reflected explicitly that Rene Girard's theories of mimesis was influential in their understanding of conflict, analysis, and peacebuilding approaches. However, by and large for interviewees, theories were described as informing background frameworks rather than providing a particular prescription for action. One exception included a practitioner who described utilising a specific multi-stakeholder process to engender inclusion learned studying for his master's degree in communications, however it is was an outlier by comparison.

Finally, the organic developmental approach was evident in how practitioners conceptualised how they measured failure and success. The interviewees were asked as part of the research to identify what had been learned from practice success and failure or challenges. Two faith-based practitioners described that the question of success and failure was itself problematic as they did not categorise or conceptualise their activities as such. Instead, they either described that they do not see anything as failure, that each experience had inherent learning, and sometimes-unexpected things emerge out of what might have been initially thought of as a failure:

> "I suppose the first thing I'd say is that I find it really difficult to think of one that didn't go the way I intended, now not because everything has been hunky dory but because of the kind of process method that I have- I don't see the end from the beginning. So I become convinced that there are some things that need to be done ….in the hope that maybe something will happen but more often than not the something I hope will happen, well it isn't achieved… but something else happens….So it's difficult to think of one that just didn't work because it's not about working or not working, it's about doing" (Practitioner 27, Faith-based, Interviewed 12/5/15).

Such a perspective was not unusual, but found itself more at odds with quantitative output-based metrics, a point that will be discussed again (see Chapter 7) as one of the challenges of a phronetic epistemology of practice. Finally, two interviewees may be seen as organic by the very fact that their peacebuilding was wholly integrated into their practice without explicit peacebuilding intent. These interviewees, referred by others through snowball sampling, did not even see themselves as intentionally engaged in peacebuilding. One was a practitioner involved with transitional justice work in communities who described an active discomfort with the term peacebuilding due to her own preconceptions of the term. The other interviewee was an academic who used Freirean pedagogy while teaching in prisons, who did not know why she was being interviewed as she felt she was not purposively setting out to create change but saw her role primarily as an educator.

6.2.2 Phronesis as containing nuanced context-knowledge

Moving back to its conceptualisation, phronesis is described and illustrated in this thesis as containing nuanced context-knowledge accumulated over time. Context, however, is not static but does contain evidence of patterns. Initially tacit, knowledge of these context patterns are capable of being drawn upon in reflection and recognised explicitly. In this regard, judgements about, 'what to do,' or to make sense of uncertain contexts are drawn from tacit recognition of accumulated patterns of 'particulars' gained from previous experiences. Where there is little experience, 'rules' for navigation are made through trial and error, or gained

explicitly by others. As experience accumulates, judgments are processed fluidly and intuitively against what may or may not be viewed as possible in the given 'habitus' or given the patterns of 'particular' contexts. As a result, judgments are viewed as context-dependent because abstract rules may be unable to generate or reflect navigational nuance. Tacit knowledge of patterns of context accumulated through experience and over time as found in the interview data will be evidenced below.

6.2.2.1 Context patterns in Northern Ireland

While it may seem obvious to state, Northern Ireland is a geographically small region in size with population of just over 1.8 million residents living per 5,456 square miles (NISRA, 2014). Despite its size, experiences of conflict have been varied. Scholars suggest that during the Troubles there were regional differences in the patterns of violence and that regions, locales and neighbourhoods were impacted by the conflict differently. As Fay et al, write:

> "There has not been one uniform conflict in Northern Ireland, rather the Troubles are a mosaic of different types of conflict. Accordingly the 'reality' of the Troubles is different for people in different locations and in different occupations" (Fay et al, 1999 p.136).

It is not surprising, therefore, that these differences would produce varying contexts of conflict and necessitate different approaches to peacebuilding. Interviews revealed tacit and at times, explicit knowledge of context patterns which in turn were used to inform, explain, predict and judge the context-for-action to ensure relevancy. For example, interviewed practitioners reflected a nuanced understanding of the way relationships were formed and situated historically in a given locale. These different locales were informed by what might be called place, or geography. For example whether the location was an urban or rural context and its proximity to the border. Intersecting with place was how communities populated the space-including proximities and densities of minority community to majority communities. In the thesis the terms are conflated together as *place-space*. Each *place-space* influenced local identity construction, meaning-making and cultural norms which might be understood as *frames* and also held histories and

episodes of conflict- understood here as *time-timing* and *fault lines*. Each of the above intersected with *relationships* in a particular context. Therefore, consideration of these nuanced dimensions of context tacitly and explicitly became a source of knowledge used to inform actions aimed at peacebuilding. Nuanced context-knowledge, not just local knowledge, was important for practice flexibility and relevancy and effectiveness in designing appropriate interventions:

> "[I]n terms of why we have done so well and why we have succeeded I think it's probably because (pause) we have been incredibly flexible and responsive to the environment. So I think reading, scanning the landscape, understanding and being able to see what's coming down the road and being able to, without compromising your principles or who you are, respond to that in positive ways. I think that has been one of the key things for us…I think scanning the landscape, not changing your practice but adapting your practice and adapting your approaches to suit" (Practitioner 24, Restorative Justice, Interviewed 5/4/15).

> "[T]he reason I put it [analysis of dynamics of parading-based dispute] around the walls was, every group that came in here, and we would have groups in here everyday, I was saying to them, look do you agree with this analysis, do you agree with the things, and they would add things to it. They would say, ah, you didn't think about the paramilitarism in the parade or you didn't think of the fact that parade, the protest is Sinn Féin orientated" (Practitioner 2, Interface based, interviewed 4/12/2014).

For this thesis these five intersecting dimensions of the patterns of context are described as: place-space, frames, time-timing, fault-lines and relationships, and each will be demonstrated in the data from interviews.

Place-Space

Several practitioners addressing the dimension of context named here as *place-space* spoke of the proximity to the border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland as a dimension that impacted on perspectives, and that those living closest to the border had experienced the conflict differently. Some describe that distance from Belfast created an orientation towards taking a county or regional approach to look after themselves to make things happen; others, given its proximity, looked towards the Republic.

For one practitioner, growing up near to the conflict-prone border county of Armagh had played a role in shaping her perspective on the nuances of navigating relationships. Her proximity to the border had meant regular contact with British soldiers- contact that had left mixed feelings. Simultaneously she felt empathy for the soldiers and viewed them as young men far from home, while also angry at their treatment of her family and friends. Furthermore there was an awareness of a tacit threat that to be seen to be too friendly might lead to an accusation of collaborating. Skills in reading the nuances of such a context was illustrated in this same practitioner's stories of practice and demonstrated an awareness of navigating the nuances of working between urban and rural locales. This practitioner, now working in peace education described how knowing how to read differing emotional sensibilities influenced her decision-making about how she might shape her approach in different locales:

> "I think with North Belfast because it's their daily life and the walls and the atmosphere and the environment, it's on their sleeve and they'll talk about it readily. Whereas Cookstown, you've got to dig, you've definitely got to dig. There's a personality that goes with each area even in terms of the group work, and I don't mean to stereotype or anything but the North Belfast ones there's a lot of hilarity, there's a lot of messing about and craic and banter and talking over each other but it's always difficult to facilitate but it's like amazing…they have built up such resiliency, they can have such a personality and they'll cry in front of each other and they'll be ok with that, emotions and everything is just right there. In Cookstown there's more like a politeness and there's definitely avoidance until people are feeling sufficiently comfortable" (Practitioner 30, Education/Schools, Interviewed 15/5/16).

As another example, practitioners working primarily in urban environments recognised the degree to which different neighbourhoods and parts of a city contained their own distinctive nuanced dynamics of *place-space*. One interviewee cited that how space was occupied within place by minority/majority variances also impacted and shaped the approaches taken across different interfaces within Belfast. Describing the differences between the interface communities of Short Strand/Lower Newtownards Road in East Belfast from that of Suffolk/Lenadoon in West Belfast, the former was described as an island of green in a sea of orange. For the latter, the opposite applied. These dynamics produced sensitivities that influenced what was judged possible in terms of inter-communal sharing of

resources, as sharing for the minority group was perceived and framed as loss. As one practitioner, a local Catholic from the West Belfast interface of Suffolk-Lenadoon put it:

> "That's a massive issue as well when you're doing cross community work, the fact that there's an estate with only 730 people in it and the other estate is 10,000, part of a bigger 70,000, 80,000. So, some people in Suffolk, a lot of people in Suffolk would say yes, this is far better the way it is here now, look at the services that we had that we once didn't but then there's other people in Suffolk would say no, actually we liked it better when it was just a big dilapidated building because it was ours, when we share we lose because of the disparity in numbers. If we share we lose" (Practitioner 28, Interface Sector, Interviewed 14/5/15).

In this example, this practitioner recognised that shared space initiatives could, in some circumstances, mean one area losing space that held symbolic and tangible meaning for certain communities, particularly where they were already in the minority. This was particularly potent in contexts where communities had already experienced a reduction of space. This practitioner understood and judged reluctance to share space within this context. Change, even if holding the potential for peacebuilding, also contained the potential for loss.

Frames

As alluded to above, interviewees evidenced knowledge and judgement in-context in light of *frame* interpretation. Examples included anticipating how those either in one's own or another community may view or interpret a particular set of actions. This knowledge was predicated upon understanding the symbolic meanings of events, history, narratives and family and community bonds deemed important culturally, in order to be able to anticipate the interpretative framing. In the example below the interviewed practitioner, a Loyalist who was part of an ex-combatant dialogue group reflected his view that a significant conflict was avoided after explaining how a planned protest would be perceived:

> "Another example would be when the Royal Irish Regiment was given the Freedom of Belfast City, com[ing] back from Afghanistan and Sinn Féin said they were going to have a black flag protest in Royal Avenue and it was a case of listen, get into this room, close

> the door, do youse realise what youse are doing here, literally the blood will flow on the street. These aren't the UDR coming home from South Armagh, you've got to understand these are young men coming home from Iraq and Afghanistan and you're going to stop their mothers welcoming this…but they still had their protest, they done it a couple of miles away and I think honestly that one intervention, I think it saved lives…See having that one conversation and saying youse don't realise what you're doing here, they thought they were playing to the masses of the Royal Irish is the old UDR, it's not like that and it's a case of this is what will happen" (Practitioner 32, Ex-Combatant/Social Economy, Interviewed 2/6/15).

Again, what is being illustrated is the judgement of how the proposed protest action organised will be interpreted by, in this case, the Loyalist community. He frames his interpretation of how he thought Sinn Féin may have intended it to play to their own masses as if it was the UDR coming from South Armagh. Describing that that context has shifted, this event was not "that context" but a new one. This is the new context, soldiers coming from Iraq and Afghanistan and it holds a different symbolic meaning, not part of the old previous contested context. Likewise, recognising that "you are going to stop their mothers welcoming this" implicitly speaks to importance of the pride Loyalist mothers would have of sons who might join the army, which if denied, could be a touchstone for conflict.

Another example of *frame* interpretation was evidenced by practitioners at the forefront of getting Loyalist and Republican restorative justice programmes off the ground in the late 1990's. Interviewed separately, each practitioner articulated an understanding of the importance of the consideration of the frame by which both Loyalist and Republican paramilitaries viewed change:

> "So what we were in danger of particularly Emily within Loyalism was to say to people give up your guns and go away. Now, give up your guns and go away to men who had a stake in society, who had a role in society and whose time and energy were all about taking care of their community, albeit in a violent way, that wasn't good enough. That gap and that vacuum had to be filled with something and the IRA and Sinn Fein did a really good job because they were able to fill it with a political model. That wasn't the case in Loyalism, the DUP, the Ulster Unionists didn't want us, so communities had to mobilise and communities had to find a way to bring about change in a healthy and a positive way but in a transformative way" (Practitioner 24, Restorative Justice, interviewed 5/4/15).

> "Republicans say, "You don't tell us who is going to do such a job." They approached us then through a person who was an employee of ours but was a long-term activist for them, retired as it were, and heavily involved in getting kids out from under punishment violence. [T]hat was kind of a formal approach, you know the first meeting was a series of ranks of people in Conway Mill. And that worked, but I mean it was senior kind of IRA figures involved in that as well and reporting back to the movement. But you see it was taken for granted, oh we can delve into Republican, no, you bloody can't. Not on your initiative you can't…Republicans would be quite imbued with the concept that the army council of the IRA is the legitimate government of Ireland. I mean that's at one level daft, but at another level it just explains the idea of authority and, yeah, in a way, we are in control, we are the state, so we decide" (Practitioner 5, Justice/Human Rights, Interviewed 3/2/2015).

Both quotes identify the importance of understanding the interpretive frame when promoting a change process. In this first quote, the practitioner firstly reflects an understanding of how Loyalist paramilitaries saw themselves, as protectors of the community. Secondly, those who had a role in conflict would continue to need a role, but the interviewee claimed Loyalism did not contain the same opportunities found in Republicanism to transition towards political representation. The second quote reflects the necessity for practitioners to understand the Republican worldview including its views on lines of control and authority. In the latter case, this practitioner articulated that this knowledge was learned through experience, as processes were stymied until Republicans decided they were ready to engage.

Time and timing

Time and timing was also featured in practice stories as a dimension of context as it might impact practice. Was it the right time to tell a certain story, to challenge a norm, or to move a group towards a more risky form of engagement? Timing in this regard was about judging whether there was enough preparation, or whether enough understanding had already been established to move to the next stage of practice engagement with groups of people, enough capacity had been built or whether there was the right leadership necessary to produce ripeness for change. Several interviewees reflected on time itself as an ingredient to change and

reflected that the amount of time it took to progress change and its pacing was important to consider, as it often did not work to move too fast.

Timing was also considered important as a condition for readiness. As one practitioner described it you might have all the resources in place but if the time was wrong a given intervention still be unsuccessful:

> "Time, that's the thing, you need more time. Also nothing will work if it's in the wrong time, timing is one of the most ignored concepts. You can have all the resources and money of the day but if it's not its right time then it won't work but you can have very little resources and produce some big things" (Practitioner 15, Community Development, Interviewed 15/4/2015)

For some, readiness was established through trial and error with judgment required to make this assessment. Reflecting on a practice failure, one practitioner working in Victims' sector described an initiative designed to bring former soldiers and policemen together with families from the Nationalist community who had been bereaved through state-based violence. Although preparation had been undertaken and all had initially agreed to participate, interaction had not gone well, with both sides reacting defensively during the meeting. The meeting was terminated, and ultimately it was judged by this practitioner as probably too early for these families for this type of engagement. A practitioner who used theatre to engage with conflict legacy themes described that knowing when and how to challenge the conflict narratives is partly about judging the *timing*, and when an audience is able hear a story that contains complexity and nuance about humanity in conflict:

> "[I]f you get those narratives 'right' and the timing of when you tell the narrative 'right' then the power of them is greatly enhanced - the context in which you produce something is absolutely key. There are certain stories it's not the right time to tell because you're going to preach to the converted, they will fall on deaf ears and the core issue will be lost – people have to be ready to hear a narrative, not simply listen but rather hear and fully engage. Production timing is key" (Practitioner 31, Theatre Arts, Interviewed 26/5/15).

Fault lines

Data from interviewees also evidenced a nuanced understanding of the systemic patterns of *fault lines of conflict* and the ways in which micro-disputes at the grassroots and within civil society and those at the political level impacted each other. Examples were shared of disputes whose epicentre began at a political level but these disputes interfered with grassroots progress on peacebuilding, also the converse. One interviewee used a metaphor of an oil rig to describe how he conceptualised this inter-relationship, describing the state as the platform and civil society as the supporting legs:

> "Because of the sensitivities here, because of a divided society effectively, it doesn't need a big crisis in one of the legs for people to talk about the institutions coming down, you know?... [T]hings that happen in civil society or that are about, particularly, the interaction of the state and the people have, you know, those relationships need to be stable in order to keep the politics stable" (Practitioner 5, Human Rights, Interviewed 3/2/2015).

As the research spanned such a broad length of time (1965-2015) interviewees identified within their stories of practice a number of examples which demonstrated both horizontal and vertical *fault lines*. At times the eruption would have its epicentre in the grassroots as a localised generated dispute with tensions travelling along fault lines to threaten progress made politically (vertically). At other times, the opposite would occur. Tensions at the political level were shown to escalate simmering disputes at the grassroots, gaining velocity and momentum before moving again to further de-stabilise top-level political progress. The presence of fault lines meant that when space for engagement contracted at either political or community level, a ripple effect was created vertically at political levels and horizontally beyond their own locale.

For example, interviewees named local communal micro-disputes over contentious parades in the 1990's (Drumcree and Dunloy), or between neighbouring Belfast interface communities in parts of East Belfast (Cluan Place) and North Belfast (Holy Cross Dispute in the 2000s; Ardoyne/Twaddell in 2013) to the broader 'Flag Protest' of 2012 as examples of disputes which had impacted practice in part because

disputes extended widely beyond their epicentre of localised origin. Examples shared illustrated that concurrent disputes in different regions but both at the grassroots level could serve to destabilise each other, as failure to make progress in one- jeopardised the other. For example, one interviewee shared that failure to make progress in a parading dispute in the small village of Dunloy in County Antrim had contributed to an increased escalation of tensions 60 miles away in Portadown at a Local Orange Order dispute at Drumcree during the same period. The same practitioner, who had also intervened in a interface communal dispute East Belfast in the early 2000's (Cluan Place) to resolve tensions between local residents on either end of that peace wall, recalled that the discovery of intelligence files at Sinn Féin's Stormont offices containing information about Protestant Loyalist community activists had resulted in a withdrawal of local Loyalists in the local Cluan Place negotiations.

A more recent illustration of *fault lines* was discussed within the research was the impact created by a regional dispute that began in December 2012, locally known as the 'Flag Dispute'. While the epicentre of the conflict concerned a decision as to whether the Union Flag would continue to fly 365 days a year outside of Belfast City Hall, the reverberations were felt much more widely across the region with areas experiencing localised rioting and protests over the decision by the City Council to use a policy of designated days.

Given that interviewees represented a wide range of civil society peacebuilding practice, insights were gained from practitioners on the impact of the 'Flag Dispute' on a variety of activities: youth and school-based partnership work, 'cross-community' activities, ex-combatant dialogue, efforts to promote non-sectarian sports, restorative justice, human rights based advocacy, and practice focused on commemorating and acknowledging the legacy of the past, to name but a few. Those working mostly within grassroots peacebuilding described a polarising affect within the communities and a marked increase in mistrust and loss of hard-won relationships. One interviewee, a Loyalist practitioner involved in a dialogue project between Republican and Loyalist ex-combatants described the sense of betrayal he felt by Republican colleagues in the group because they had not consulted with

Loyalists about the impact changing the flag might have produced with Loyalism stating:

> "[W]e thought communities are moving on really well, we had a reasonably settled assembly and then boom, the flag came down, it came down on the Monday night and the Saturday we were already agreed to go to an event in Dundalk to talk about the Maze prison site…and then this happened….[C]onsidering some of the things we've been through together in the past, really serious community tensions where discussions were had to head things off so things didn't happen, I felt a certain amount of almost betrayal that we'd worked so closely on things at great personal risk and then this happened" (Practitioner 32, Ex-Combatant/Social Economy, Interviewed 2/6/15).

The dispute was perceived not only to have setback practice at the grassroots, but gained momentum to become a source of contention to destabilise political level negotiations. For example according to one interviewee, substantial progress made to negotiate the building of a Conflict Transformation Centre at the site of the former Maze/Long Kesh prison with which they had been closely involved, subsequently collapsed as a result. While the epicentre had been Belfast, the symbolic *fault lines* represented by the removal of the flag hit a nerve within Loyalism. Energised by the grassroots this led to a broader set of reverberations vertically to the political level when the DUP decided to completely pull the Maze/Long Kesh development. Unsurprisingly, practitioners evidenced an understanding that efforts at peacebuilding initiatives became more limited when this dynamic was set into motion as space for peacebuilding engagment contracted.

Relationships

All of these dimensions of context describe up to this point: *place-space, frames, timing, and fault lines* all deeply impacted *relationships*. One practitioner used the metaphor of an 'archaeological dig' and that each layer uncovered a previous layer of contextual history:

> "It's personalities, it's the family feuds, it's individual actions that then run down through the generations and in fact, in terms of some of the neighbouring villages the perception of this place is it's always feuding…. I think the issues were always so deep seated that it was always going to take

> much more to keep things going and the slightest thing to push things back" (Practitioner 16, Community Development, interviewed 15/4/15).

Throughout transcripts practitioners evidenced the tacit knowledge that practice was situated in contexts of systemic relational distrust. During open coding 30 of the 40 interviewees made a total of 90 references to issues of 'trust' making it the highest referenced analytical category of all transcripts. In fact, as mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the significance of trust building within practice was deemed one of the most salient themes emerging in the research, and chosen for theory-building with practitioners as referenced in the discussion in Chapter 5.

Distrust and therefore trust-building was referenced at multiple levels of practice intervention. These patterns were most highlighted after a matrix was used (see Appendix 10) to map references to distrust and trust at multiple levels: individual, inter- and intra-group and community, institutional and political. The matrix evidenced distrust as pervasive. Therefore, particular attention and investment in building a base level of trust was necessary to progress change. While that may sound patently obvious given the divided nature of Northern Ireland, it was still nonetheless striking to see the comprehensive nature of the distrust evidenced. For example, distrust was evidenced in the form of 'gossip' in one-to-one encounters at the individual level, described by practitioners as a means for testing loyalty or integrity:

> "In the more negative end of things, they did all pretty much all without exception test us in one way or another, sometimes very subtly and sometimes very obviously. One of the things that some of the more highly placed tended to do was to give us a kinda, racy bit of information, that was false with the understanding on both of our parts that if it turned up somewhere they would know it came from us" (Practitioner 11, Mediation Interviewed 31/3/15).

At the community level distrust was evidenced throughout stories told by practitioners who described paranoia and suspicion when groups met for the first time, evidencing knowledge of why this might be expected, given the context:

> "There was an awful lot of mistrust in rural Fermanagh and quite rightly because people had been killing one another for decades, people had been killing one another and sometimes they pointed to their neighbours five fields

> across and did they know that was going to happen to me that day? Or who brought those guys into this community, how did they know where such and such lived, you know… [I]f you look at Co. Fermanagh, many incidents are burnt into people's psyche, right across the county" (Practitioner 34, Funding and Social Economy, Interviewed 8/6/15).

Peacebuilding organisations also experienced distrust from members of the communities in which they worked, especially if they worked too closely with those who were distrusted. One practitioner told a story of having their premises fire-bombed because community members viewed their NGO as having worked too closely with a statutory agency:

> "But if the City Council or if the police are involved and move a bonfire on or whatever, often we get the blame for that as an agency because they think that we're acting as touts and we're passing on information. So last summer was very difficult particularly in East Belfast where City Council had removed several bonfires, where police were involved in some situations and it just became very tense and very difficult to the extent that just after the 12th our East Belfast premises were fire-bombed by young people who felt that we were too close to them and we'd taken that information and we'd passed it onto the system" (Practitioner 24, Restorative Justice, Interviewed 5/4/15.

Importantly, one seasoned mediation practitioner's experience working between senior police and a local Republican community led to a nuanced theoretical insight on the limits middle-range actors may have as conduits between grassroots and senior level leadership. Lederach views middle-range actors as useful to maintain both horizontal and vertical relationships, referred to as a "middle-out approach" to peacebuilding (Lederach, 1997 pp.41-42). While on some occasions this approach had been effective in Northern Ireland, in particular locales and at particular times there was such heightened distrust that those who had contacts with both top level and grassroots actors became suspect- with the belief that they must be working to someone's agenda. Thus, while integrated peacebuilding at all levels of society is considered important in peacebuilding (Lederach, 1997), this example illustrated that in highly polarised contexts, those attempting to maintain networks may themselves become a source of suspicion and distrust because they sought intentionally to adopt a "middle-out" approach. The nature of this pervasive distrust and the lengths

necessarily taken to mitigate its impact on practice is a topic that will feature significantly in Chapter 7.

Conclusion

This chapter sought to present the evidence of phronesis as an epistemology of practice and demonstrate it as a significant epistemology and source of knowledge used by peacebuilding actors to make judgment about peacebuilding decisions. Gained by personal history experience, organic development and experimentation-phronesis was formed by both objective and subjective embodied forms of knowing. Conceptualised as a form of context-dependent knowledge, when examined for this research, data evidenced among those practitioners interviewed-a tacit recognition of nuanced context patterns. Five patterns of context were evidenced and named as: place-space, frame, time-timing, fault lines and relationships (discussed in this chapter as systemic relational distrust). Chapter 7 seeks to build and extend insights from the data presented in this chapter. To do so, it takes as a primary focus on evidence found in the data about ways that practitioners use phronesis to progress social change processes. In particular, this will include phronetic knowledge is used to used to navigate the context of systemic distrust through by seeking to build trust and demonstrate trustworthiness.

Chapter 7: Using phronetic knowledge to progress peacebuilding

Introduction

Having established evidence of phronesis as a primary epistemology of practice in the previous chapter, the aim of this chapter is to demonstrate how practitioners use phronetic knowledge to progress peacebuilding social change. In particular, this chapter's focus is on ways that phronetic knowledge was used to navigate a context of deep systemic distrust. The salience of trust as a theme that emerged inductively from the data is the thrust of much of this discussion and the chapter will illustrate the mechanisms of trustworthiness that serve to mitigate risk. The chapter next moves back to phronesis as an epistemology of practice to consider not only successes but also the challenges and tensions this epistemology of practice presents in the current 'technocratic' (Mac Ginty, 2012; Chandler, 2017) climate of peacebuilding. Finally, the chapter concludes with a discussion of the importance of identifying and conceptualising phronesis for affording a better understanding of grassroots and civil society peacebuilding in Northern Ireland.

7.1 Using phronesis to navigate context to promote change

The ability to navigate context is an important attribute of phronesis or practical wisdom as it is conceptualised in this research. As stated in Chapter 6 the third finding of the research is that according to practitioners, change processes are enhanced when using this form of knowledge to influence change processes. Or in other words, peacebuilding 'success' was enhanced when practitioners 'used the context to change the context.' How to understand, scan and navigate the context was a topic referenced by practitioners in the interviews. Spoken of as 'reading the situation' and 'scanning the landscape,' context navigation was illustrated both in stories of practice but also linked to interviewees recollections of early formative experiences which had influenced their practice. Interviewees for example, told of experiences trying to make sense of 'rules' for everyday life that contained

paradoxes, contradictions and exceptions. For some, it was why they couldn't regularly visit family members who lived in an East Belfast when they lived in West Belfast. For others it was the difference between public and private faces. For example, one interviewee reflected her clergyman father's church being regularly picketed by Ian Paisley. However, she recalled confusion when during face-to-face encounters, Paisley was affable, personable and friendly. Mixed messages and learning nuances of context were tricky but perhaps necessary. One practitioner, a Catholic who grew up in South Armagh, reported confusion as a child about how to relate to both her own Nationalist/Republican community and the 'other' side, in this case, British soldiers. This interviewee recalled that while she was taught to be polite and respectful to a British soldier, her parents explained that this rule held exceptions. For example, not to greet a soldier in front of a neighbour:

> "[I]f you're passing a soldier or a policeman or whatever…make sure and say hello because that's someone's son or a father or brother or whatever, and quite often especially the fellas from overseas who don't even know why they're here, but if a car is coming don't be seen to be saying hello. And my dad always would have said it's the people in our own community we need to be more worried about in terms of the IRA and the 'say nothing' thing…So I always would have been aware… who do you trust and who is on your side?" (Practitioner 30, Education/Schools, interviewed 15/5/15)

This same practitioner, in stories of their peacebuilding efforts, evidenced a similar ability to read nuances between how practice differed depending on the context, reflecting an ability to distinguish the particularities and variances of people and their sensitivities to conflict across different locales.

Given the salience of the theme of trust to the research, this next section drills down to illustrate ways practitioners found it necessary to use context-dependent judgement to navigate systemic distrust by gaining trust. The importance of engendering trust both personally and in their associated peacebuilding intervention can be broadly discussed within four dimensions. These are named as:

- Point of entry trust- the importance of personal credibility of a practitioner and peacebuilding change initiative.
- Proxy-trust- relationships built with key credible indigenous leaders.
- Process trust- gained through demonstrations of trustworthiness and trustworthy behaviours and sometimes by operating under the radar.
- Pragmatic trust- the usage of relationships and networks for pragmatic reasons, or as a means of incentivising change.

Each of the following four elements will be subsequently described and illustrated by the data.

7.1.1 Point of entry trust

Data from interviewees described peacebuilding practice significantly enhanced by the ability of a practitioner to garner trust with relevant stakeholders, for example, local residents, community-based groups or institutions involved in change and/or reform (such as schools, prisons and the police). According to practitioners trust was built in a number of ways and was important for demonstrating personal integrity and credibility. Examples used by interviewees included: investing time getting to know people as individuals, committing to a long-term relationship, demonstrating integrity by leading out on risky projects, admitting mistakes, and also by challenging others when necessary- especially members of one's 'own' community. Without established personal integrity and credibility, practitioners reflected that peacebuilding interventions were challenged from the beginning:

> "Another significant part of that is your willingness to take responsibility when you make an error and everybody makes errors, so to be willing to say hands up, I got that wrong is a big thing…I think those kinds of behaviours make change possible because people will say that what you're talking about has enough integrity to change for, if you know what I mean? So maybe that's about the credibility of the direction in which you're headed and what helps people to buy into that and it makes it credible enough for them to buy in and I think your behaviour helps to make that change" (Practitioner 27, Faith-based, Interviewed 12/5/15).

In addition to proving personal integrity, trust was also gained according to practitioners by 'starting where people were at,' by taking a non-judgmental listening approach, or demonstrating respect for established internal protocols. For this reason, for some practitioners the concept of a 'theory of change' contained a troubling paradox containing an implicit imposition that a person was required to change, which jarred with taking a non-judgmental approach. For several practitioners, the conscious desire to be non-judgmental was important because if peacebuilders came across as about trying to change people it was actually counter-productive. Behaviour that could be construed as judgmental, for those who held this view, was described as ineffective and served to harm building relationships. One interviewee squared this circle by describing his 'theory of change' in emancipatory language emphasising 'process' more than 'outcome:'

> "[T]he theory of change is underpinned by a belief that people with find their own way in these things and so me pushing my belief will not, will not actually work in fact it may only bring people's defences up more. In that sense the theory of change is trusting the individuals' ability to take their own journey and trusting in the process of what you are doing rather than necessarily the outcome" (Practitioner 6 Youth and Schools/Community Relations, Interviewed 6/2/2015).

> "I think I'm very resistant, I think my difficulty with all this is that I'm very resistant to the notion that you're going in…you're trying to build peace because it sounds as if you're being manipulative and it sounds as if you are going in to do things to people. What you're doing, you're not actively making that your main aim, you're doing your job and you're doing it to the best of your ability but you're not trying to manipulate the situation. If they want to end up peacebuilding that's great and it certainly would be very nice if they did but that has to be their decision…[Y]ou could go in full of self-righteousness deciding exactly what you thought of people who were in a jail and… that's not actually the way to change anything" (Practitioner 17, Prison-based Education, Interviewed 16/4/15)

Finally, demonstrating commitment, patience and perseverance were highlighted as important ingredients to helping to build up trust and credibility irrespective of whether success was gained:

> "[T]he dissidents had a protest in the Prisons around 2010, and they had wrecked Roe House and whatever and then they sent, asked me to represent them and see if we could get the conditions changed. So I and a colleague spent a lot of time…three years now, so I deal a lot with them in Roe House in the prison there and negotiating with the prison service there and the

> government about how they should be treated. And of course it's not just altruism that does that for me. I also have a view that if I can build up that relationship, get them to trust me, do XY, at the same time looking after the prison officers and have a conflict free place in prison, a conflict-free zone then I can go on to the next stage that they should de-commission. Are you with me? Because building up that trust it's a long process" (Practitioner 12, Economic Sector, Interviewed 2/4/15).

7.1.2 Proxy trust

Of the 40 practitioners interviewed, all but six were from Northern Ireland. However, there was recognition, even among those from the region that general 'local' knowledge wasn't always enough. Practice relevancy was predicated on having a good understanding of the particular localised context. If not germane to the area, a credible point of entry to the specific locale or group was important in order to be seen as relevant and to help engender buy-in. This was particularly true when working in institutional reform. As an example, one practitioner involved in policing reform involving senior leadership and rank and file police officers, attributed some of the project's success to having secured the trust of the senior leadership. Worth noting is his distinction between gaining trust but not becoming allies in order to retain credibility. This was accomplished over time by investing in the relationship, proving to ensure confidentiality, and by respecting the extant boundaries and organisational culture, while at the same time not shying away from challenging its practices:

> "But at the same time we had his trust…. [T]here was an agreement to treat one another respectfully but it was a testing and testy agreement for about the first 6 or 7 months and then we came to a point where…relationships between us somehow clicked. Now, we were never his friends, we were never his allies and we never expected him to be our friend or our ally, otherwise the whole project would lose its credibility. It was a critical dialogue project, but he acknowledged that we had convinced him of our bona fides, and we acknowledged to him that he was probably one of the toughest police officers we'd ever had to deal with but we'd also knew that he'd also been through some very tough situations himself and we honoured what he was doing" (Practitioner 39, Education/Research 16/6/15).

Building strong relationships with contextually important leaders was identified as important to success, which one practitioner described as 'pied pipers.' The concept

was illustrated again by other practitioners who when speaking of practice 'success.' Gaining the support of particular people was important, because whether as a result of their status, personal charisma or set of networks, the 'pied pipers' were able to introduce, lever and build support for introducing change. Their status also allowed them to critique their own community, and in some cases help facilitate and persuade more resistant groups members.

The decision to use ex-combatants in youth-based restorative justice was cited as an example of involving 'pied pipers' to ensure buy-in with communities. When asked to further expound upon why this was important when initiating restorative justice programmes, one interviewee reflected on their own judgement:

> "[It was] important in this context… we needed to empower local communities to have a voice, to move away from violence and to grasp the relevance of peacebuilding for their context…. [I]t wasn't enough for us just to hire local youth workers with really good skills, yeah. We did some of that because we needed that but we also tried to hire people that young people listened to in a positive way and could have influence over that. So that was the scary bit of our model and the quite risky bit of our model but it's now become probably good practice even in the States that ex-offenders are the people on the street who have credibility and resonance with young people" (Practitioner 24, Restorative Justice, Interviewed 5/4/15).

Reviewing the quote again as an illustration of the use of phronesis suggests that the practitioner believed that those with the technical skills, youth workers were not enough. There was another type of knowledge needed that she believed would carry weight with the young people, and build capacity to help establish restorative justice. This instinct to utilise those with ex-combatant backgrounds with internal community sway from the beginning has been described as a part of the success of the development of restorative justice in both Loyalist and Republican communities (Shirlow and McEvoy, 2008 pp. 126-132).

Similar to the above example, other practitioners used 'pied pipers' by bringing individuals perceived to be resistant to change- to lead and vanguard change. The story below describes a dialogue initiative between senior Republicans and police which emerged after the Patten reforms in order to build support for community policing in Republican and Nationalist areas. The project was successful in its pilot

stage and was rolled out across Northern Ireland after Sinn Féin joined the Policing Board:

> "We had a police team with us as well we had a group of officers who worked quite closely with us from each rank, and one of them [Policeman A], his dad had been killed by the IRA. We made sure we had officers that they weren't the soft end they were the hard hard end of policing. We had [Policeman X] who was known as swamp clearance. [Policeman X] was English, moustache and when you saw him, he was hate figure… [Policeman X] became District Commander here and he completely bought into the project, so we had [Police X] we had [Police A], whose father had been killed…[Also] one of the things that [Police X] did which I think was critically important, was that he went to the police family, he went to the disabled police officers and to the Red Cross, the George Cross Association, the Police Widows and he met with them and he told them what we were doing because he brought them into the process" (Practitioner 2, Interface based, interviewed 4/12/2014).

As this quote describes, the initiative was further enhanced when the wider networks in the police family were also engaged such as the disabled police officers and police widows associations. In cases such as this, proxy-trust developed with affiliated groups such as an extended network and/or families had a generative effect. One schools-based peacebuilding practitioner described that once trust had developed with parents- a result of specifically focused group work with parents- it further raised the project's credibility with certain School Principals. Parents, in this case, became a source of proxy-trust, which provided an entry-point for the practitioner to ensure buy-in with senior school leadership. Practitioners intervening in prisons found similarly that building trust with prisoner families helped to build proxy-trust with prisoners. Following from this, trust built-up with prisoners aided the practitioner's credibility with the group perceived to be least trusting, in this case, prison officers.

One practitioner, a Republican ex-hunger-striker recognised that he also had these qualities. His status as a former hunger striker earned him credibility, which he subsequently used at times, to promote change:

> "There has been a couple of times where I have written to An Phoblacht…. I wrote an article saying about when I was at the vigil which was outside of City Hall for Ronan Kerr who was killed. I said about standing there feeling a bit uncomfortable because you know, I am standing with these other people who I know that I am former IRA and looking at you and going "Oh Aye…" but

> then at the end of the day feeling that I should be there and it was right that I was there" (Practitioner 7, Republican Ex-Combatant interviewed 9/2/2015).

Interviewees evidenced nuanced understandings of why trusted leadership was so important- as well as the risks associated with promoting change. Two phrases aptly sum up knowledge of these dilemmas. The first, 'putting your head above the parapet' was spoken of regularly in interviews when referring to those who were willing to take a risk, articulating that individuals who advocated for change often did so at personal cost. The cost, particularly when this phrase was used, was often an attack or potential ostracisation or scapegoating by members of their own community. For example, one interviewee working in the area recalled that one of the women who had been instrumental in developing shared community development and regeneration between the Suffolk and Lenadoon interface had been the recipient of abuse and targeted because of her cross-community work.

Other practitioners told similar stories that illustrated the high degree of risk that those taking leadership decisions made which at times were unpopular with others. One practitioner, an experienced mediator, recounted several stories whereby local community leaders and those affiliated with the Orange Order who involved in negotiating parading disputes had 'followers' who had turned against them:

> "At the end of the process, we went and facilitated a meeting in the hall with the Nationalists, and it was stormy but they came on their word. The Orangemen who did the deal with us were savaged. A crowd came in buses packed the meeting chased them out into the hall, pinned them against the wall with tables, scared the bejeezus out of them" (Practitioner 4, Mediation, Interviewed 8/12/2014).

In this particular example, the interviewee recalled that he had been in contact with one of the Orangemen six years after the event and later learned that the individual's children had suffered harassment at school, his house had been targeted, and the experience had dissuaded him of future involvement in similar peacebuilding negotiations or efforts.

These stories indicate an implicit and explicit knowledge of the fine line between being prepared to take leadership and the need to maintain credibility at one's base and can be applied both to leaders at the community or organisational level. It also

illustrates one of the concepts that surfaced in chapter 4 (in the historical account of practice) which was described as a 'Janus face' approach to relationships. The 'Janus face' necessitates an ability to step forward into a change process while maintaining credibility within one's own community. David Ervine, a progressive Loyalist politician who participated in the Good Friday Agreement negotiations, was for example, mentioned by three different interviewees as an example of a leader who was able to walk a line between maintaining credibility within his own community while advocating change. Ultimately, practitioners reflected that leadership for change necessitated buy-in from followers, requiring leaders who could adequately connect to and reflect the concerns of those least open to change in their own community.

7.1.3 Process trust

Highly visible in stories of peacebuilding practice success and failure, processes themselves also needed to be perceived as trustworthy. Despite utilising differing methodological approaches, such as drama, dialogue, sport, restorative practices, mediation, or community development, practitioners reflected an awareness of the importance of building into the peacebuilding intervention or activities assurances to demonstrate trustworthiness. For example, dimension of process named as particularly important for 'success' and for ensuring ownership was: being as inclusive as possible, emphasising the importance of being open to listening to all viewpoints, and ensuring that processes included transparency accountability, and reliability. Finally, conversely practitioners cited as important that at times processes demanded invisibility- to operate 'under the radar' so as not to jeopardise hard won trust from being lost.

To illustrate the first of these points on inclusiveness- examples were shared which highlighted the importance of spending time to get to know and involve those who had previously been excluded, or who might be viewed as potential spoilers in peacebuilding intervention. Instead of being viewed as a problem, interviewees

described that such potential spoilers needed to be listened to, included and involved in peacebuilding. Examples of the significance of 'process trust' included: the purposeful engagement with politically motivated prisoners in the Maze in the 1980s, community development and peacebuilding work with community gatekeepers in the small village of Harryville outside of the town of Ballymena in the North East of the region during a localised community dispute in the early 2000s, to more recent efforts to involve Loyalists in deterring racist hate crime by integrating new migrants into local communities. In one example, an educator in an integrated school felt that a key to his success in a school-based mediation stemmed from the fact that those with the most extreme views, and who had been continuing to create conflict and discord in the school, were included in the process. Allowing all voices to be heard was echoed strongly by practitioners so that the complexity could be fully acknowledged.

Practitioners described that efforts, even after extensive involvement with stakeholder groups could be stymied by powerful individuals who blocked change. However, processes ultimately gained by striving to be inclusive, working with possible gatekeepers from the outset. Several practitioners told stories that illustrated judgment calls about how to work to include those who have the power to block progress. The following story sheds some light on one practitioner's reflective process and the subsequent changes in her judgment and practice, based on learning from the experience that peacebuilding was enhanced working with potential gatekeepers:

> "[W]e had a local project worker….. On the surface some things seemed to be going well, and we felt we were making slow progress, till her house was shot up. And she had to get out under police protection…That was after a few years, and I went, we've done something really wrong here, I'm not sure what it is but I have to sit down and analyse it and see where we are going. So that was something that did not work well… I concluded that actually, I had maybe colluded with some of the authorities by saying, "If that person's involved –or that person's involved we aren't touching it, and there will be no services put in or whatever." [C]ertain people weren't round the table. That was big learning for me, to say, actually that conversation should have been going on parallel from the outset…and [I should have been] trying to get to know them, and understand them. Trying to explain what you were trying to do…[T]hat was where my learning was- that from then [on]since, right from the outset. "No those people have to be around the table, and it did work…And the difference that that made and the journey since has been

> quite incredible on the estate. So, it went from having every other house boarded up to now a waiting list to get into the estate. So, it ended up being a success story but it was a disaster at the time" (Practitioner 3 Community Development, interviewed 8/12/2014).

Practitioner stories demonstrated that when participants were widely included in consultation and decision-making processes, this helped to build ownership. One practitioner who worked to promote inclusivity and anti-sectarian behaviour in International football attributed a great deal of the project's success to a careful process of including fans representing all of the supporters clubs in all stages of the process. He articulated that initially fans were surprised to be asked to participate but had stepped up and taken ownership of working to transform the atmosphere at the football matches in creative ways. However, he attributed that change to fans that had been included from the beginning-which in his perception was the key to ensuring ownership:

> "I think that was probably the turning point for actually getting them on board and nobody had ever invited them, it was a simple thing like inviting them into the IFA building and putting on food for them was like, the fans couldn't believe that was happening, it was a funny moment. But I think that was a bit of a turning point, just talking to them direct and I said to them at one point during the meetings, we cannot achieve this without the supporters, you know, this whole thing will fall on its face if you guys don't buy into it and they sort of took it and run with it. And in the early days of Football For All it was seen more as a fan's initiative than an IFA initiative and I was happy about that because that's what you wanted, that was a sign that it was working I think" (Practitioner 35, Sports-based, Interviewed 9/6/15).

In addition to being inclusive, listening was also considered an important component of building up trustworthy processes. While it may be perceived as basic, listening opportunities were described at times as a most important and necessary dimension in establishing trusting relationships, reducing fear, and re-humanising each other. One Republican ex-combatant, now involved in restorative justice reflected that in the context of working with those he would traditionally considered enemies, such as the police, listening to understand had become increasingly important to his practice:

> "For me, I think the biggest key to peacebuilding in this whole place is listening to people, everybody listening to each other, no matter what, how

> bad it is or how brutal it's going to be, going into the room and sitting down and having the conversation and trying to see it from the other person's point of view. You don't always agree but you say I hadn't really thought of it like that but we can agree to disagree but at least we're sitting here talking. And I think that helped…So I think really about what I've learnt is listening to people and that might sound as if it's a script but for me it's true" (Practitioner 38, Restorative Justice, Interviewed 16/6/15).

Behaviours which demonstrated transparency, accountability and reliability were also cited by several practitioners as important to building process trust, by being 'straight-forward,' and not to 'blow smoke' but only promise what could be delivered. To explain why it was so important to be as straightforward as possible, another practitioner attributed it to the experience of conflict which is often fuelled by rumour and innuendo. Consequently, straightforwardness was "a natural antidote " (Practitioner 27, Faith-based, Interviewed 12/5/15).

Finally, practitioners also described the necessity to, at times, purposefully operate 'under the radar' at times and to become more invisible if certain contexts deemed too risky or threatening to be more explicit about peacebuilding. The metaphor of the Trojan horse was used by several practitioners across different sectors, in particular those that used other mediums to deliver peacebuilding aims such as through arts and sports-based activities. In discussion with a practitioner of digital arts, film and technology, they explained that twenty years ago they had been commissioned to produce a children's cartoon of the mythological story of Cuchulainn the Irish Celtic Warrior. They began showing the film in local schools as part of the outreach, finding that Protestant schools particularly receptive to the animated story and a non-threatening way to look at culture and identity. The interviewee recalled the conversation he had with the teacher:

> "[T]his is a new experience for us. And as well as that thanks for coming with Celtic mythology because we can't deal with that stuff, but we can as a cartoon"… So, that was a light bulb moment for us. If we do stuff about history and cultural identity and mythology and things here in animation then it won't be seen as coming in as propaganda for Republicanism and all this type of stuff….that kids didn't, that teachers didn't find this threatening" (Practitioner 1, Arts and Culture Sector, Interviewed 27/11/15).

The ‘under the radar’ approach was one they continued to adopt in their practice, teaching digital arts but doing so in ways that encouraged an interrogation of ideas, to disturb monolithic notions of identity. An ‘under the radar’ approach was also particularly spoken about in circumstances whereby keeping activities quiet was a necessity for their continuance, implying that there was a certain level of tacit approval for such activities.

In other circumstances the ‘under the radar’ approach was used as a conflict prevention tool to keep tensions from escalating. One practitioner involved in interface work described that, “It takes an awful lot of work for nothing to happen” (Practitioner 32, Loyalist Ex-Combatant/ Social Economy interviewed 26/5/14) and that many quiet behind the scenes conversations needed to take place at times to de-escalate potential micro-level conflicts. Practitioners involved in inter-communal dialogue spoke of occasions when in order to get certain people together in the same room, they had to obscure the true purpose of the meeting:

> “So the parades, the North and West Belfast Parades forum was set up to try to and have a cover thing … [To] find a way, that the Orange Order can be involved in discussions with the residents groups. So, the North and West Belfast Parades Forum was set up, the Orange Order are in that along with the paramilitaries, that became the way that they could talk” (Practitioner 2, Interfaces, Interviewed 4/12/204).

Similarly those working with ex-combatants on restorative justice projects articulated a similar indirect approach in order to gain their support for approaches moving away from violence:

> “We were doing the work with young people but also as part of that we were educating paramilitaries about a different way of being but it was happening Emily very informally, we knew it was happening and we were doing it deliberately but we were engaging them in very informal ways that they weren’t actually aware that the process was good for them” (Practitioner 24, Restorative Justice Sector, Interviewed 5/4/15).

‘Under the radar’ was seen to be an effective way to introduce change processes that might otherwise cause threat. It was reflected that while it allowed work to progress at times of higher risk, paradoxically having to keep a low profile also may at times contain the types of changes that can take place.

7.1.4 Pragmatic trust

Building relationships and developing key networks were strongly linked to practice success. Once built, networks could be instrumentalised for a variety of purposes. Networks were mentioned explicitly as an important and necessary ingredient in peacebuilding initiatives by 17 sources and evidenced also in the stories of practice, in fact several stories overlapped. In the sample of 40 there was noteworthy repetition of key names and evidence of colloborations and connections between interviewees who would not have known they were both being interviewed.

Interviewees who spoke of the importance of networks commented on them as important as a conduit to achieving shared goals. One interviewee involved in the prisons in the 1980s described the relationships and networks established during those years with political prisoners representing paramilitary organisations. Their view was that this early work helped to pave the way for contacts to be built across paramilitary structures which built a foundation later strengthened and formalised during and after the ceasefires and peace negotiations. That insight prompted the mediator to adopt the principle, "Build networks before you need them" (Practitioner 11, Mediation interviewed 31/3/15). For this interviewee having networks in place meant that when the timing was right, the people infrastructure was already in place.

Other stories of practice featured a reflection on the general location of civil society organisations as a conduit. One practitioner working in the human rights field described adopting a role acting as a 'translator' between different levels of society. His practice story described working with both paramilitary leaders and officials in the Northern Ireland Office prior the Good Friday Agreement on discussions on matters relating to prisoner releases:

> "[O]ne of the interesting things about both that…was the intermediary role of civil society actors. I mean there is a phrase I have used, the ability to move between different worlds of experience and understanding. So, you know, you be talking effectively to the IRA in the morning and talking to the NIO in the afternoon on the same subject but you kind of use different language…I don't mean just terminology… but how you kind of structured

> the argument, you know" (Practitioner 5, Human Rights, Interviewed, 3/2/15).

Finally, networks were featured as important vehicles for sharing information; connecting community-based initiatives as exemplars to draw inspiration from and learn from each other's practice, to bolster opportunities to impact policy at a wider level, or more pragmatically to improve the quality of life and resources in the local community. Practitioners spoke explicitly and implicitly of the hooks or carrots that networks created that brought people into a peacebuilding activity or process either by the promise of increased resources (access to new technology, sports experiences, community halls, trips) or with the prospect that involvment would generate a tangible positive outcome for institutions, communities, or individuals.

Several practitioners working in interface areas describe that building networks had resulted in positive benefits for the whole area. Decreased violence often meant that residents could remove boards from their windows, it increased access to shops, created new economic activity in the area, or led to increased housing values. One practitioner describing improvements tackling interface tensions commented these tangible outcomes helped to build commitment for peacebuilding intercommunal trust-building dialogue:

> "When they took that wood down, and they were able to let light in their house, that is a tangible result for those people. Whenever, the gate can open later, that is a tangible result. Whenever there isn't stones being thrown, whenever kids aren't going in and attacking, whenever windows aren't being broken, that's tangible" (Practitioner 2, Interface based, interviewed 4/12/14).

> "These two communities coming together initially in the early 1990s and that was kind of the background of, it was before the ceasefire so the political conditions weren't as conducive then as they are now. [T]he initial, securing the buy-in of the community you had to appeal to people's own self-interest. So you weren't saying oh let's work with the other side or let's get involved in this project because it's the right thing to do, because we want a shared future and because morally it's the right thing to do, no, actually it's going to benefit our community" (Practitioner 28, Interface-based, Interviewed 14/5/15).

Practitioners indicated there were positive outcomes when networks were used for pragmatic reasons. Recent shrinking budgets in the statutory sector (i.e. education,

policing) have made it economically prudent to take advantage of additional resources. Practitioners who identified using pragmatic networks as a lever found it useful in schools, for example, to engender support for peacebuilding as it provided additional support and educational resources to the institution:

> "I think it's probably one of the most sectarian towns in Northern Ireland and go back five years ago there would've been no contact between the schools whatsoever…..but they now share classes, our kids go to their school and their kids come to our school. For the simple reason that they can't provide the curriculum on their own because they haven't got enough pupils, so the only way they can actually recruit them is to come to our school, the only way they can get A level subjects is to come to our school and we go to their school for some. Now, five years ago that would have been unheard of; it hasn't yet changed the sectarian dynamics of the town that much but it's happening, you know, and it brings you back into this thing around, the balance between the attitudinal approach which has to be there as well, but you actually, you need to have this thing about changing behaviour and using whatever levers you have at your disposal to change it" (Practitioner 18, Funding/Community Relations Interviewed 17/4/15).

However, practitioners also commented on the downside of using networks for purely pragmatic purposes, particularly where it has been attached to money and funding. In these cases, there was strong feeling that the incentivisation to build relationships to receive funds meant that there was a greater likelihood of both a given project and associated relationships ending when funding concluded.

7.2 Challenges associated with phronetic epistemologies of practice

There were several themes that emerged within the data that speak to tensions and challenges for practitioners using a phronetic epistemology of practice. Stories of practice "failures" were particularly instructive in gaining a clearer picture of what did not work and why in a given intervention. While it is not surprising that interventions faced challenges, it was noteworthy that there were broad areas of agreement about sources of tension across the variety of sectors of practice. Once again, the conceptualisation of phronesis as a way of knowing and learning, as a form of nuanced context-knowledge, and a source of knowledge used to promote relevant change, lent explanatory power and consequently will be used again as a structuring device in this section.

7.2.1 Professionalisation and reflective practice

Professionalisation of the field of peacebuilding was described, by practitioners, as having impacted and influenced practice in both positive and negative ways. Those who highlighted benefits spoke of growing partnerships with statutory bodies and being viewed as both credible and legitimate. For example, restorative justice practitioners working in the field since the late 1990's recognised that it was their expertise that had been tapped when youth justice agencies mainstreamed restorative conferencing, and it was their organisations that had trained most of the statutory justice sector. One arts-based organisation spearheading digitally based culture and history conflict education resources became the lead agency to develop a new digital arts 'A' level in Northern Ireland for the Education Authority.

However, some practitioners described that partnerships with statutory bodies and funders led to increased pressures to prove effectiveness and impact. In some cases, this was linked to having to translate their more organic non-linear views of practice into metrics that measured outputs and outcomes. As one practitioner described:

> "[S]oft outcomes are really those things that really you can't really measure, it's like increased confidence…. they're anecdotal kind of things and I think that's the kind of currency that we work in. …[I] get a bit annoyed when, even though I've described it myself as a soft outcome- that's the way professionals and funders would describe them. I think that to see somebody grow in confidence and being able to do stuff that they couldn't do previously, I don't see that as being soft myself….we work at that very human level and with people the change is very gradual, it's very gradual"(Practitioner 25, Victim's-based sector, Interviewed 8/5/15).

Several practitioners described that funding practices, especially those associated with the European peace funding involved a bureaucracy that necessitated levels of administration that consequently increased professionalisation. Two particular points were made on this topic; firstly that this increasing attracted individuals motivated more by a wage than by values. Secondly, greater professionalisation decreased voluntarism as projects became outsourced to "professionals" described by some as creating a peace industry:

> "[W}ould much less money have helped? Yes, but nobody was putting their hands up to say give us less… [In] the voluntary sector and so called peacebuilding [sector], we were all managing, programming, in the wake of the peace programmes and I think that was a bit of a distortion…I mean, that switched the context dramatically in that time…[T]he Peace programmes came along and more professional workers were and people came for jobs, not because they came with that belief and commitment, they came because they needed a job. So suddenly you felt that at points, I'd think gosh, you actually didn't come because you had a real commitment here, you came because there was a job" (Practitioner 23, Community Development, Interviewed 30/4/15).

> "[E]verybody was an expert, we have more community relations experts….In a lot of areas the whole voluntary nature of community relations disappeared because everybody had a paid official and often the paid officials weren't from the area, you know, so you lost something; the whole rationale of our policy around community relations was local volunteers, it's everyone got involved. But once you brought a professional in everybody said well we've got somebody to do the work, we can all sit back and, you know, you just lost that sense of voluntary initiative and that changed quite dramatically" (Practitioner 18, Funding/Community Relations, Interviewed 17/4/15).

The loss of volunteerism and reliance on professionals articulated in these quotes meant that there was a perception that increasingly practice was predicated on whether there was funding available to pay for the professionals, run the organisations, or create programmes attractive to participants. Practitioners now experiencing a contraction of funding articulated an observation that activities and practices were now substantially more limited. Three practitioners in particular reflected that a shortage of funds narrowed what they could offer to potential participants, and caused them to cease some of the activities they had earlier implemented:

> "[W]hen I started here, I'm here just over 5 years and when we started here we were very fortunate with the resources, financial resources that we had at our disposal…[T]hat funder has went, we've lost a lot of jobs, we've lost a lot of money to deliver programmes, we're very limited on what we can do now… were able to do a lot of activities because we had money to do activities, we had money to bring them to places of political interest here in Ireland and across the water. We had money to explore their differences and explore their similarities, take them out, we'd so much stuff but we don't have those resources anymore" (Practitioner 28, Interface-based, Interviewed 14/5/15).

Becoming too funding reliant also meant in some cases, organisational mission drift when gaps in funding or shortages generated activity less directly connected to practice sector expertise. Similarly, funding shortages was offered as an explanation for a lack of reflection of peacebuilding practice, coupled with the perception that funders weren't necessarily interested or prioritised practice-generated reflection. In these cases, there was a view that pressure to deliver on promised aims and objectives, and meeting funding requirements within timeframes naturally limited thinking about what you might be able to achieve beyond that. One interviewee who had worked with sports-based peacebuilding for a number of years linked a lack of reflection to grant chasing, and a loss of vision, goals and self-confidence in the sector:

> "I think in Northern Ireland we've become sort of indoctrinated and in the community sector we've been so trained to go after the grant… that we actually lost sight of what was right for Northern Ireland. If we're being really reflective, we need a really fresh approach, we need new blood and we need new thinking and we need to break the old ways…. I think that's a symptom of Northern Ireland, we don't, we need to be stronger and to be confident enough to say this is what's right for Northern Ireland" (Practitioner 35, Sports-based, Interviewed 9/6/15).

Others saw reflection as a luxury unable to be indulged when time and resources were at a premium and described decreased reflection when funding was uncertain, or shorter term in nature as more time gets spent "fire-fighting." This was echoed across all sectors, with those in the voluntary and community sector most vocal about recent funding shortages, financial insecurity and burn out. Several interviewees who were waged employees felt reflection was also not always prioritised by their employers or that reflection had no avenue for feeding back to inform decision-making, likewise, there were those who saw that formal reporting for reflection was sometimes also perceived to be a mandatory tick-box exercise.

For those interested in learning from their practice and who valued knowledge which had been gained about practice, frustration was articulated about whether their knowledge had avenues for dissemination in order to impact organisations, social policy and/or academic knowledge production. Across the board practitioners

unequivocally voiced the view that knowledge which practitioners had gained was not valued and utilised to its potential. Dissatisfaction with government and policy makers for their disinterest in their experience and expertise was voiced, but likewise, several practitioners blamed their own organisations and sector-based bodies for not doing enough to facilitate and to consolidate organisational learning from peacebuilding practice:

> "[W]hen it comes to like things like the Community Relations Council, the Equality Commission, OFM/dFM, to me they really missed a trick not capturing that, that information and actually coming up with youth, like in Northern Ireland it would make sense to have like a sport and peacebuilding centre. To me that would be, the rest of the world would be interested in that and we would have some really interesting case studies….But there seems to be a reluctance…So yeah, I feel probably let down I would say by the likes of the Sports Council, Community Relations Council, Equality Commission, OFM/dFM they just seem to move at a snail's pace on these things" (Practitioner 35, Sports-based, Interviewed 9/6/15).

Interestingly, practitioners whose methodologies or programmes had influenced policy or which had become mainstreamed also reported dissatisfaction. This was due to the fact that practice had only been replicated in part and not in its entirety, missed elements perceived as key to project success, or even that due credit was not given. For example, though several interviewed practitioners had work featured in the government's peacebuilding policy strategy *Together: Building a United Community* (The Executive Office, 2013), one respondent felt that what was in the policy was very different than what had been submitted, while another felt acknowledgement for the practice-inspired policy development had not been given. An interviewee had been at the forefront of initiatives to reimage political conflict murals- a practice replicated at statutory levels- summed up these sentiments:

> "…[W]e were the people that led on all the murals and negotiated with communities on all the murals…So we gave the idea. You know the one thing in the voluntary and community sector is that I've learnt in my experience it's that we are the R and D of the statutory sector.... We do all the R and D and then once the penny drops and resources become slightly more or an organisation says "maybe we should try that", you're kind of then pushed out of the equation but you're like the poor relation, you deliver the work but you're not branded and you're the technical assistants and you're kind of elbowed out" (Practitioner 14, Environmental/ Community Regeneration, Interviewed 9/4/14).

While blame was laid with policy-makers and the sector itself, practitioners reported more mixed experiences with academia. Several lauded their relationships with academics and reported on positive experiences of collaboration that illustrated a view of separate but compatible roles. For those practitioners, strong relationships with local academics was viewed as beneficial to those less interested in 'theorising,' making them content to outsource that role. The majority however, thought that the relationship was not symmetrical, with those on the more positive end welcoming greater collaboration viewing it as a way to strengthen their practice:

> "There are loads of levels at which we can make the relationship between academia and the artist more exciting and less one-way traffic. I would really welcome that. Also when you look at the legacy of a project and when you look at maximising the impact of projects, which is what we all believe in, then the role of the academic in facilitating reflective practice but in a manner that is not simply for the artist but for a more structured assessment of methodology is invaluable" (Practitioner 31, Theatre Arts, Interviewed 26/5/15).

Other practitioners held less positive views as a result of their experiences collaborating with academics- believing the partnership was not necessarily win-win, or that the academic role came with a higher status than practitioner. As an example, one interviewee described collaborating with a local academic to produce research but stated their input had received no mention in the publication. While it had not put them off working with academics, it created an impression that academics were, at times, self-serving. In another example, an arts-based practitioner described that while his organisation had more recently built better relationships with academia, his view was that previously the work hadn't merited attention or been viewed as worth learning from:

> "It's only really almost in very very recent years that the University would even see us as anything at a level that they would partner with. We always seem to be just seen as a bunch of maverick creatives in the city....I have always felt they have an ivory tower approach" (Practitioner 1, Arts-based Sector, Interviewed 11/27/14).

Finally, one practitioner involved in community development in particular felt that in academic courses there could be better utilisation of practice-based skills and

knowledge. Their critique was that a lack of practical hands-on training left new graduates in community development ill-equipped for the field. A conclusion was drawn that inclusion of practice-generated experience could contribute more to academia that was currently being offered:

> "[I]t could be about getting practitioners to come in and talk to students…. I have real concerns about how community development is being taught in our universities and how community relations is being taught in our universities and how there is a massive lack of experience in terms of practice experience for those coming through the other end… I was shocked at times, things like negotiation, mediation and conflict resolution weren't built in as part of community development training. To me, that's a no-brainer, it should be part and parcel of community development training and it's not, and how can that be. And particularly when you are doing community development in areas where there is conflict" (Practitioner 3, Community Development Sector, Interviewed 8/12/2014).

In summary, there was a general recognition that peacebuilding practitioners working within civil society were not widely viewed as important knowledge producers. Given that over half the group had more than 20 years experience engaged in peacebuilding activities but that such knowledge was not perceived by interviewees to have been adequately utilised, is striking. Evidence from transcripts illustrated that practitioners did draw lessons from their own accumulated knowledge of a variety of peacebuilding interventions. However, while stories shared in interviews demonstrated usage of insights gained over years, interviewees identified that there were few structured or formalised pathways to systematise practice reflections or to pass on knowledge to share lessons learnt.

Bureaucratic practices and administrative burdens which accompanied current funding programme requirements were cited as partially to blame for a lack of reflection that might engender more knowledge shared and utilised. However, those that had an interest in participating in knowledge production voiced concerns that even within their own organisations there was a failure to capitalise on learning that had been generated. While practitioners stated that some of their own learning had been shared through research conducted by interested academics and had positive experiences of working with academia, others felt this relationship

lacked symmetry and wished for greater opportunities for practice-generated knowledge to be given greater credit.

Overall, dismay was voiced that without such recognition, in an increasingly depleted and under-resourced civil society, hard-won knowledge gained from experiences in the worst and most difficult times of the Troubles was at risk of being lost. Practitioners described disillusionment that those who had been creative and innovative for years during the worst of times were now facing their organisation's funds drying up, watching as organisational histories including memories and knowledge of what had been learned and achieved, fading without due recognition:

> "I look around at people who were like practitioners when I was young who were kind of inspirational and now they're kind of moving into retirement. [T]hey are quite disillusioned and the disillusionment takes a number of forms, it can be "What was it all about, did I really make any difference" or it can be "I knew what I was doing, why did nobody listen."…[F]or people who were in the vanguard of trying to make peace back in the day, I don't know…. maybe we didn't value them or know how to listen to them, maybe they were cutting through the ice at the sharp end of the ship and those of us at the back end of the ship didn't know what a struggle that was or how to listen to what they'd learnt, equally maybe they were just staying alive, it's what had to be done rather than finding ways to tell us what was going on. But no, not valued enough" (Practitioner 27, Faith-based sector, Interviewed 12/5/15).

7.2.2. Relevancy and incentivisation

The data suggests that practitioners use phronetic knowledge to read the context and that context is necessary to ensure relevancy. Stories of practice 'success' and 'failures' highlighted tensions that existed between responding to felt need in order to be relevant, and balancing this with meeting expectations associated with pre-planned funding requirements. Featured in stories of peacebuilding failures, one quarter of all interviewees shared stories that demonstrated that relevance was perceived as reduced or constrained when practitioner judgment was superseded by funding requirements that either dictated particular programmatic themes or required particular geographic locales to be matched.

One interface practitioner described two cross-community dialogue projects to illustrate this point. One focussed on a joint social history programme perceived as less contentious as it examined local families, businesses and pastimes of the area. This was followed by a more politically oriented programme, which explicitly focused on national identity. The former had generated much interest with standing room only, while the second, more politically oriented programme had almost no attendees. While the practitioner was unsure why the second political programme had not generated interest, he speculated that most ordinary people were not too interested in politics but rather with programmes that were perhaps less contentious such as local social history. However, in his experience funding was more readily available if you could be seen to be addressing 'harder topics.' This led to tension between expressed need and what funders required, with an embedded implicit assumption that the 'harder topics' needed to be addressed. While this may be true- this approach lacked the flexibility to consider that, for example, an interface community that had borne a brunt of a traumatic conflict might be best moved forward towards peace in less direct ways using less contentious topics:

> "[T]hat's one of the issues in this whole sector as well because often you have funding requirements which are pushing you away from the expressed needs and interest of the communities, I think. It's much easier to get funding for the big political stuff, personally that's the stuff that I'm really interested in but perhaps the community is much more interested in and sees much more value in doing stuff that will actually develop them personally and socially" (Practitioner 28, Interface-based, Interviewed 14/5/15).

Several practitioners recalled stories whereby, as a result of funding requirements, they had been diverted to involve groups or constituencies they would not have immediately seen as relevant to their core purpose. Often these examples were tied into European funding requirements to include border regions in peacebuilding initiatives. While some authentic connections to conflict issues could be established, examples also illustrated that motivations at times were more economically based:

> "There was a section for cross-border work, and [Name of organisation] had contacted us and actually came to us and said, this was way back in say 99, right? And said, we've got a wee bit of money and we'd really like you to do

> a project, it's very short term… and I didn't want to do it. I didn't want to do it because I didn't see that it fitted in with our ethos, not our ethos, but it didn't fit in with our programme and it didn't fit in as far as I could see with our vision. But I went to the board and their response to me, which was right, which was if it's bringing money into this area, if it's employing people, take it" (Practitioner 2, Interface-based sector, Interviewed 12/4/14).

The outcome when relevancy was compromised was a perception (as referenced earlier by the sports-based peacebuilding practitioner) that practice could become a grant chasing exercise. Those interviewed who recalled this dynamic reflected that they had found creative ways to try to increase relevancy even when funding requirements did not match. However, others described decisions taken not to pursue funding that included such requirements-for example, by deliberately seeking out more independent funding sources that used or validated practitioner-based judgment.

Similarly, those receiving peace funding through the EU described that pressure to deliver constricted the time, and that trust and relationship building which was necessary to ensure sustainability, was rushed. This was exacerbated when funding was used to incentivise and motivate groups to come together without a genuine readiness, preparation and support for engagement. For example, a cross-community keep fit class sponsored by two victims' organisations led to a respite trip where one of the groups' sectarian behaviour ultimately led to the dissolution of the partnership. Retrospectively this practitioner felt that there had not been enough preparation, or professionalism shown in particular by the partner organisation. It was viewed that such incentivising peacebuilding also led to short-term efforts with a short shelf life. If funding ended it had not at times, resulted in a genuine rebuilding of relationships but seen as a means to an end:

> "[T]he community halls that had signed up to inclusive mechanisms, we'd gone through work for a number of years to ensure openness or whatever, and you saw them drifting back into segregation and think well, what is that about, I mean, people actually came through a whole process where they signed up, but of course, they signed up because there was money…. [L]ater, I used to say when I went to meet groups, just for the hell of it, not for the grant, to see what really people wanted to achieve within their communities for themselves, because we became a very dependent grant culture" (Practitioner 23, Community Development, Interviewed 30/4/15).

7.2.3 Fault lines and gatekeepers

Phronesis is conceptualised in this thesis as using nuanced context-knowledge and drawn on to promote and lubricate change, referred to earlier as 'using the context to change the context.' However, at times practitioners reflected on tensions that may also be attributed towards taking this approach. In particular this surfaced for practitioners working most closely and directly with grassroots communities- for example, in interface areas, or practices involved in intervening or mediating across contested spaces, negotiating parading and marching routes, or developing flag-flying protocols. In these cases, being responsive to context at times meant a period of waiting until tensions died down. However, several examples of practice "failures" highlighted that when localised conflicts rippled out among contextual fault lines it could also close doors permanently.

In these interviews, stories of practice "failure" evidenced similar patterns. Often the issue causing contestation (described as fault lines Chapter 6) began as a localised dispute and quickly led to community conflict, rioting or violence. The impact of such events along historical fault lines disrupted or impacted progress made of peacebuilding. The most recent example of this was the previously mentioned, 'Flag Dispute' of 2012-2013. For example, fifteen practitioners spoke of work having to be either halted entirely for a period of time during the Flag Dispute, or that it had been set back and momentum lost. These interviewees spanned multiple sectors (youth-work, school-based peacebuilding, cross-community activities, ex-combatant dialogue, efforts to promote non-sectarian sports, restorative justice, human rights based advocacy, storytelling and commemoration) and all spoke unsolicited of the impact of the Flag Dispute on their practice. It is noteworthy that not only inter-communal peacebuilding but also intra-communal work was impacted. As one practitioner involved in efforts to shift sectarian attitudes within sports commented:

> "I would feel the flags dispute… had a massive impact… it hardened a lot of the supporter base and actually a lot of the good guys who were involved in Football For All, a lot of those guys from the fans base actually left their supporters clubs and got a bit disillusioned. [W]e noticed some of those guys

> stopped volunteering around about that time and I think that set us back, that sort of flags issue… sort of set back the momentum and there was a hardening within that sort of community and I think in recent years there is even more mistrust around what community relations and what peacebuilding means" (Practitioner, Sports Based, Interviewed 9/6/15).

Likewise, another practitioner involved in supporting dialogue in his local area, the Suffolk Lenadoon interface in West Belfast, mentioned that the Flag Dispute had caused a retraction of cross-community engagement- reportedly the result of intimidation within Loyalist communities not to attend. This same practitioner living in the Lenadoon area recollected that in the late 1990's when the conflict in Drumcree had been at its height, the area had been similarly deeply affected by rioting. A similar story was relayed by a practitioner working at the time in North Belfast – another area highly charged due to the volatility sparked by the conflict at Drumcree. Such stories all surfaced independently of each other without any direct questions to elicit such examples, and each evidenced a similar conflict pattern and dynamic that impacted local and regional peacebuilding.

Finally, practitioners also found that while some community leaders might be 'credible leaders' and exhibit charisma allowing them to become 'pied pipers,' still others may use power to gate-keep, maintain status and block change. Several interviewees reflected that paramilitarism in some communities acts as a restraining factor to involvement in peacebuilding. One particular schools-based practitioner working in North Belfast had to halt work for six months in 2014 due to a threat issued by local paramilitaries. Tackling the issues head-on, this practitioner met with local paramilitary leaders to determine the nature of the threat. After paramilitary leaders refuted the credibility of the threat work was restarted with the schools. Once the work had restarted with an enthusiastic response from local parents, this practitioner viewed the high participation as a vote of protest against the on-going nature of living in an atmosphere of control and intimidation. Recognising it was not always safe to voice aloud support for peacebuilding; she nevertheless interpreted their increased presence in programmes as a sign of their desire for change:

> "Oh my God, they came in the door, they came in the door…63 people came out to that event, loads of men too…Both sides. They basically for want of another term, were voting with their feet that they wanted it to continue and I think the problems in the atmosphere, let's say, made them realise they probably needed this more than ever. The sense that we got from some of the ones that spoke on that day was very much, I want to support my school, my kid and what the schools are doing. Here to support my kid. Here to support my kid. I think it was one of the earliest times in the year that we've ever had anyone very strongly talk about bitterness and hatred and how this was something that would help with that." (Practitioner 30, Education/ Schools, interviewed 15/5/15)

Similar stories offered by other practitioners from across sectors recognised that in certain communities, paramilitary presence exerted control and produced fear and intimidation- making peacebuilding for some, a continued risk:

> "I am just hearing from some people that they have a stranglehold….the intimidation, do you know what I mean? As though they are still something. And it's hard to tackle that, it's hard to go face on with that… I don't mind doing it, do you know what I mean, but if there were ever repercussions on my family or anything that's a fear. I don't really care…So you have to be sorta careful as well, because if these people don't like you making peace, but it sorta puts them out of a job. They are running the show, they are power. You are up against that too when you are building peace, you just have to be careful" (Practitioner 10, Victim's Sector, Interviewed 24/2/15).

These examples illustrate that while using a phronetic approach can enhance sensitivity to localised dynamics, at times it may limit the activities of peacebuilding. It is also interesting to consider whether it is possible that being too context-dependent may inadvertently reinforce powerful gatekeepers. These last two examples paint a picture of the hold that paramilitaries continue to have on community. One could argue that cancelling programmes, or being very careful as the last quote suggests, serves only to reinforce this power-base without due challenge. In this regard, those taking a phronetic approach could be accused of avoiding, or lacking the courage to confront abuses of power.

Conclusion

Chapter 7, building from the evidence provided in Chapter 6, sought to demonstrate that practitioners in their efforts to promote peacebuilding social

change, use phronesis and the deep context knowledge it contains, to navigate, enhance, lever and lubricate change processes on the ground. It was demonstrated that personal experiences living in a context of division and conflict often played a formative role in honing phronetic knowledge. Evidence of the necessity to navigate pervasive distrust through demonstrating traits of trustworthiness both personally and in peacebuilding processes were described by interviewees as were catalytic to practice. Trust building was discussed across four areas as: point of entry trust, proxy-trust, process-trust and pragmatic trust. Each was considered as important ways that practitioners working at grassroots used phronetic knowledge to mitigate risk and use context-knowledge to build support for peacebuilding social changes. The chapter concluded by highlighting broader sets of tensions described by practitioners when using a phronetic epistemology of practice. The discussion focused on the ways phronetic epistemologies are challenged under the increasingly professionalised peacebuilding requirements-straining relevancy, reducing volunteerism and reflective practice. Likewise, using a phronetic approach and being responsive to the context may mean peacebuilding activities are halted under threats from community gatekeepers.

Taken as a whole, the aims of Chapters 6 and 7 were to comprehensively serve to evidence the four broad findings that emerged from the field research and the data analysis in order to demonstrate the salience of phronesis for affording a better understanding of grassroots and civil society peacebuilding practice. The next chapter uses these findings to continue to build a discussion and in particular to take into consideration what implications the findings suggest to current debates in the academic and practice field of peacebuilding locally in Northern Ireland and globally.

Chapter 8: Discussion

Introduction

The evidence emerging from this research has identified that the concept of phronesis is important in affording a better understanding of grassroots and civil society peacebuilding practice. Evidenced among the interview data as a significant influencing epistemology of practice, phronesis included a nuanced understanding of patterns of context. Research for this thesis identifies that practitioners use phronesis (at times out of necessity) to navigate, enhance, lever and lubricate change processes on the ground in Northern Ireland. Furthermore, trust building mechanisms were deemed catalytic to promote change in a context of pervasive systemic distrust. Up to now, phronesis as a form of knowledge necessary for peacebuilding has been elided. In light of the evidence, in this chapter I will argue that phronesis is a pertinent and useful form of knowledge and its conceptualisation is important to the academic, theoretical and practical applications of the fields of peace studies and conflict transformation.

This is not to negate the importance of theory (episteme) or technical skills needed for peacebuilding. It is, however, to suggest that without phronesis these two forms of knowledge are incomplete, and that peacebuilding which does not consider and use phronesis- is inherently limited. Phronesis is a necessary form of knowledge for peacebuilding in order to ensure contextual relevancy. Peacebuilding at the coalface of conflict and division may mean a day-to-day navigation of the conflict contexts- of the 'particulars,' including understanding the nuances of people and their place, histories, relationships, frames and fault-lines. For this reason, phronesis may be an epistemological position most germane to bottom-up peacebuilding and those working at grassroots and within civil society.

The chapter will unfold with a discussion of the findings by first expanding on the explanatory dimensions of the concept of phronesis by touching on ontological and epistemological insights. This is followed by an exploration of the knowledge production possibilities of phronesis by: 1) considering phronesis as a set of lenses

for conflict analysis; 2) for practice innovation; and 3) to build relevant theory which if not used, may impede or short-change peacebuilding in policy and practice. The chapter will next consider the particular salience of phronesis as a conceptual lens for knowledge in, of, and for, a better understanding of grassroots and civil society peacebuilding. In particular, this will be considered in light of issues raised in the literature review on whose knowledge counts and what kind of knowledge matters for building peace. After a discussion of its utility, and the merit and insights generated for peacebuilding theoretical literature debates, the chapter concludes with recognition of the limitations of the concept including dimensions that may necessitate further research.

8.1. Phronesis: ontological and epistemological explanatory power

While not anticipated from the outset of this research, when applied to the evidence generated by the data, phronesis shed a useful and explanatory light on grassroots and civil society peacebuilding. It further unpacked the nature of how judgments and decisions of 'what to do' are made, in context. Findings from this research identified that phronetic context-knowledge was important as a determinant for relevant peacebuilding choices above the adoption of particular theory or universals (episteme) and over a mastery of skill (techne). In making visible the primacy of judgement-in-context as determinants of action, scrutiny shifts to both 'context' and 'judgement' as units of analysis. Such scrutiny opens up each term by elaborating on their interrelationship and producing both ontological and epistemological insights.

For example, many interviewees revealed that their own experiences growing up and living in a context of conflict had shaped their ontology and their epistemology of practice in peacebuilding. When interviewees were asked to first reflect on how they became involved in peacebuilding (with the exception of those not originally from Northern Ireland) the majority were able to trace their initial involvement to being either directly or indirectly affected by growing up or living in a context of

conflict. Additionally, one-third explicitly stated that these experiences had directly shaped their own approach in their peacebuilding practice. For example, one practitioner critiqued their own experience attending an integrated school because contentious topics were avoided, a practice he states he intentionally challenges in his own peacebuilding work.

Ontological influences also became apparent as practitioners described being born into a particular context of conflict. In local areas such as the Bogside in Derry-Londonderry in the late 1960s, interface areas of Belfast, and South Armagh in the early 1970s, practitioners described how living in these environments necessitated navigation of the conflict terrain to manage and mitigate risk. This included learning how to distinguish between the 'universal' and the 'particular context', as 'universal' rules governing everyday life did not always apply. Judgments and decisions had to be made day and daily about which rules could and could not be followed, these conflict rules were sometimes learned explicitly, through the advice and warnings from parents, and at other times, learned tacitly. To comfort someone whose brother is dying is typically a 'universal,' but one interviewee spoke of the confusion when there was no open acknowledgment that his classmate's brother was close to death. However, as this occurred during the contexts of the Hunger Strikes, the practitioner described that an open acknowledgement of such events within school was tacitly forbidden. Parents issued rules to one interviewee "to be polite" to a soldier but also that such rules had to be bent to mitigate threat, "only if no one was watching" as openly expressed empathy might generate suspicion of being a 'tout' among neighbours. Perhaps a common feature of a context of internal domestic or civil wars, neighbours who in theory should be trusted- may instead be accused of informing on one another, or responsible for sharing information to target each other:

> "There was an awful lot of mistrust in rural Fermanagh and quite rightly because people had been killing one another for decades, people had been killing one another and sometimes they pointed to their neighbours five fields across and did they know that was going to happen to me that day?" (Practitioner 34, Funding and Social Economy, Interviewed 8/6/15).

The research data revealed an ontological view of self deeply embedded in context, and that what was acceptable in one context, might be dangerous in another. Mitigating risk was predicated upon being able to understand how to navigate context. Understanding this ontological orientation affords greater insight into how and why an epistemological perspective might emerge among civil society actors which views judgement and agency as context-dependent. Individual actions needed to be context-dependent, with judgments of 'what to do' best understood against the parameters of being embedded in a particular context. For many holding such an ontological position judgment of 'what to do' necessitated using experience as a guide to identify the contextual terrain identified in the previous chapter: place-space, frame, time-timing, fault lines and relationship. Knowledge was guided by both explicit (visible) and tacit (invisible) knowledge and judgment of a particular conflict context using patterns accumulated with experience over time. Conflict navigation depended on the ability to read the context, understand how the patterns of context fit together, and know one's place within it-determining agency for action or inaction. When experience had not yet been generated, others shared the 'rules'. Childhood stories from practitioners evidenced and illustrated explicit learning of tacit rules of conflict. If phronesis is conceptualised as a product of accumulated experience over time, which places high value on the subjective knowledge such an experience might generate- it is unsurprising to find that this body of knowledge is most valued and highly drawn upon by practitioners. Ontologically speaking, practitioners demonstrated a view of self-embedded in, not separate from context, a possible explanation of why phronesis was evidenced as the primary epistemology of practice.

As mentioned earlier, one third of all interviewees articulated their own lived experience had directly shaped their own peacebuilding practice. Given the complex conflict terrain it could even be suggested that experiences of living and working within conflict afforded unique knowledge and understandings in how to build peace. For example, one practitioner from a Nationalist background involved in negotiating parading disputes attributed his success to years of employment as a first responder within mainly Protestant statutory services which liaised heavily

with the police. Working closely with police and other first responders in the aftermath of conflict incidents had improved his understanding of the Protestant community worldviews. These insights had, in later years, according to the interviewee, proved useful for his efforts at parade negotiations.

The concept of phronesis, therefore, helps explain why there was a greater reliance on lived subjective experiences over use of theories or techniques as neither would or could approximate for the nuances needed to navigate a particular context. Even practitioners using theories and techniques such as mediation and restorative justice recognised that relevancy was linked to their ability to use the context by drawing on phronetic knowledge to embed theories and techniques for relevancy. As one practitioner described: "It wasn't enough to hire someone with skills" (Practitioner 24, Interviewed 5/4/15). In their view it was particular people who would enable communities to see peace as relevant, in this case, ex-combatants.

The following excerpt with an interviewee provides an example of the ways phronetic context-knowledge is used to direct methods (techne) and theories (episteme) to inform action. This interviewee, a seasoned local mediation practitioner, shared a story in their interview about being asked to join a consultation of European INGOs to offer advice on another conflict in the region. Reflecting afterwards on the transcript, I was struck with the sequence of their thinking because it outlined an understanding of the importance of using context as a determinant of action. While clearly this practitioner was not germane to the context they were advising upon or possessing of the necessary local phronetic knowledge, nonetheless the advice in the consultation reflects an understanding of its importance. As the excerpt will illustrate, it was their view that knowledge of context (phronesis) determined the form the universal (episteme) would take to determine "what to do." Strategies (techne) of how to direct the intervention came last. I reflected on this difference and shared my initial analysis with the practitioner through email. What follows is the summary of the story and the exchange.

Describing first the initial discussion held during the consultation at the European Peace INGO, my interviewee reflected:

> "I said [to the other professional from Peace INGO], 'we have to help them [the disputants] go from impulse to method,' He says, "No, I think we have to help them go from impulse to strategy to method, and I was thinking 'No, that's not how it works, that's how it looks'. Because there were times when I would have drawn a strategic development chart that for me starts with the abstract idea, like mediation, then you apply it to the context, which is say Northern Ireland, it could be criminal justice system, it could be victim's work, so when you apply the abstract idea which is a universal idea to a context, out of that you get a concept. And when you have conceptual clarity what it is you are about, you then begin to test it, and that it where you are experimenting with modalities, or methodology you do things. And then when you have an idea about what it is, what your tools are, and which is your method, you then develop strategy" (Practitioner 4, Mediation Sector, Interviewed 8/12/15).

My own notes accompanying the transcript reflect my interpretation of the difference in the two approaches:

> It strikes me this is a different sequence. The [INGO] is following an understandable logic pattern: Impulse-Strategy-Method. It follows logically and reminds me of the research process. Define the scope of the research-distil my question, out of my question determines the methods of how best to answer the question. What [my interviewee] is saying however is different—he is saying start with the idea. Mediation for example. Next you take it to the context—the judgement about context then determines the concept of "what you are about" as he says- in other words the concept is the result of the equation of the idea against the limits by which you have to work within.
>
> Or put mathematically:
>
> $\mathrm{IDEA} \div$ Judgment of what will work in Context (what I am calling Phronetic Knowledge)= Concept (Which may be his theory of change)
>
> $\frac{\text{Idea}}{\text{Judgement}}$= Concept
>
> After defining the concept then you figure out which models or methods work with the concept, then you develop a strategy of what to do.
>
> Concept x $\frac{\text{Methods}}{\text{Phronesis}}$ = Strategy
>
> The difference that I see he is making is that context judgment comes first in determining how the idea translates conceptually. This then yields the methods or models tested to experiment about which methods work best or which models might work best in context. The strategy flows from knowing how to direct the methods most effectively.

What becomes clear in this discussion is the definitive importance that context judgment plays in building a conceptual framework to determine relevant action or how one might intervene. Furthermore, judgment of the context also determines the methods, or technique. Reframing within the Aristotelian terms, phronesis is

the primary and unifying source of knowledge which determines how the universal (epistemic) idea, mediation in this case, is to be made relevant. Once this judgment has been reached, methods or techniques (techne) may also be chosen which are deemed most appropriate. However, the process does not end there, as my interviewee reminded me in the email exchange. Continually questions are asked of the context to work out whether the prototype makes sense in the given context, or as my interviewee put it, "[W]e pay more attention to the context and what it is telling us about relevance, credibility, what appears to work and what doesn't (ibid)." Given that context is not static but ever changing, this process lends itself towards iterative reflexivity.

The need to understand context and to acquire context-knowledge was viewed important by the practitioner for maximising relevancy and as a source of legitimacy. Other interviewees alluded to context knowledge as important but instead used the term 'local.' Drilling down into how the term was used, 'local' was more than a geographical locality. 'Local' was used to describe those who had, over time, acquired the necessary embeddedness to demonstrate the relevant context-knowledge- this too suggests phronesis. The following exchange taken from my interview with a community development practitioner provides an illustration:

> "Emily: if you had to pinpoint some of the things again, if you had to choose three things that has made that [project] so successful or even pinpoint fewer than that?
>
> Practitioner 8: Yeah, I could. Local community ownership of the process from zero to implementation that's one. Two, a local person from the area as the project worker in that area.
>
> Emily: And why does that matter?
>
> Practitioner 8: That matters because he already has, he or she already has the trust of the people in that area. Fullstop.
>
> Emily: He has the trust because…?
>
> Practitioner 8: Because he lives, he's from there, he's lived there thirty years…
>
> Emily: And he is still living there?
>
> Practitioner 8: He is still living there, he lives on the street with them, he lives in the [named geographic] area. It's not rocket science"

(Practitioner 8, Ex-combatant/Community Development, Interviewed 12/2/2015).

What both examples also illustrate is that often the language of 'context' or 'local' can be used without its more phronetic elements understood. The terms 'context' and 'local' by themselves are useful at denoting aspects of phronesis but lack the nuance that the fuller conceptualisation brings. For example, neither 'local' nor 'context' by themselves recognise the presence and importance of tacit knowledge which can only be acquired by experience. It is the tacit dimension, however according to philosopher Polanyi that contains much of human beings "highest creative powers" (Polanyi, 1966 p.15). For this reason, as I will argue in the next section, it is important for peacebuilding knowledge to include the tacit dimension, and in this way the conceptualisation of phronesis both deepens and extends beyond the current ways that both 'context' and 'local' are viewed and used in discussions of peacebuilding. This next section continues by illustrating phronetic knowledge as a unique location for knowledge creation and production.

8.2 Utility for knowledge production: phronesis as a set of lenses

This research found that practitioners use phronesis and the deep context knowledge it contains not only to navigate, but also to enhance, lever and lubricate change processes. Stories of practice demonstrated ways that explicit and tacit use of phronetic knowledge became a tool of conflict analysis and innovation for conflict transformation and peacebuilding. This can be described as a set of lenses used to aid judgment in peacebuilding, or 'what do to' in the particular situation. For the sake of clarity, these dimensions are first defined and then illustrated by a diagram (See next page).

The Phronetic Lenses

Relationships: The dynamics of people, families, and communities including roles, and importance, who hold credibility and networks, as well as patterns of cohesion, conflict, trust and mistrust.

Place-Space: The geography of locality and how communities are physically situated within that space, including urban and rural, proximity to the border, and whether a community was minority/majority in a given locale.

Time-Timing: Past, present and future are important elements of reading context, the present can become collapsed with the past, similarly the present can reshape interpretations of both past and future.

Fault lines: Recognition of patterns of conflict and how they are triggers, e.g. marching seasons, patterns of riots, symbolic triggers, flags, tension that cause inter and intra communal space to contract.

Frames: All of the above dimensions influence local identity construction, meaning-making and cultural norms and include and interact with discursive and non-discursive symbolic worldviews.

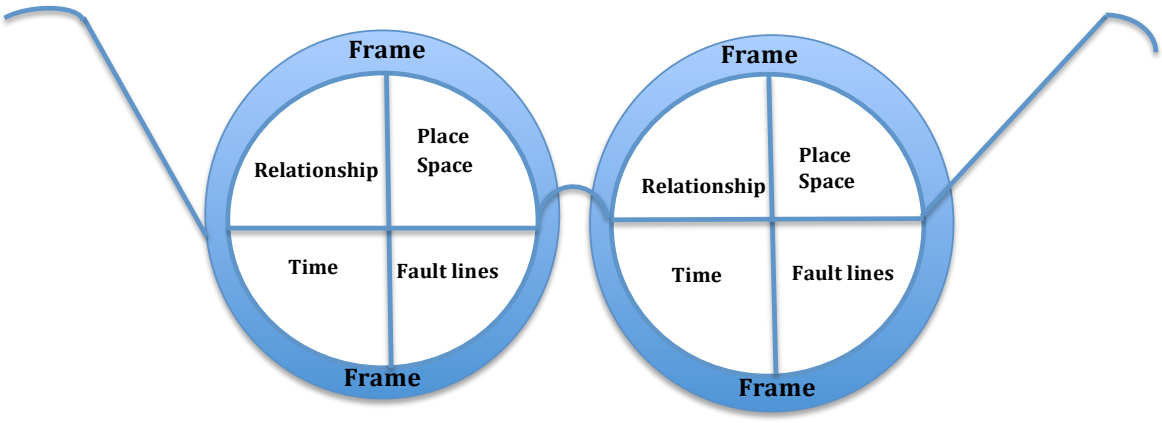


Figure 5: **The Phronetic Lenses**

8.2.1 Phronetic lenses as a tool of analysis

As the data has shown, interviewees recounted that for many practical peacebuilding activity operated, at least initially, organically. Nevertheless the evidence illustrates that both implicitly and explicitly phronetic knowledge was used to analyse, predict, and explain the conflict landscape in order to determine how to challenge norms as part of promoting change. For example, revisiting a previous quote describing how a potential conflict between Loyalist and Republicans was averted through dialogue (as recounted in the previous chapter) can be further analysed for its use of the phronetic lenses:

> "[W]hen the Royal Irish Regiment was given the Freedom of Belfast City, com[ing] back from Afghanistan and Sinn Féin said they were going to have a black flag protest in Royal Avenue and it was a case of listen, get into this room, close the door, do youse realise what youse are doing here, literally the blood will flow on the street. These aren't the UDR coming home from South Armagh, you've got to understand these are young men coming home from Iraq and Afghanistan and you're going to stop their mothers welcoming this…they still had their protest, they done it a couple of miles away and I think honestly that one intervention, I think it saved lives…See having that one conversation and saying youse don't realise what you're doing here? They thought they were playing to the masses of the Royal Irish, it is the old UDR. It's not like that and it's a case of- this is what will happen." (Practitioner 32, Ex-Combatant/Social Economy, Interviewed 2/6/15).

A deeper examination of the quote illustrates a nuanced grasp of the context-for-action and can be discussed as evidencing use of the phronetic lenses. For example, at stake in the negotiation is the need to manage a fault line that has the potential to erupt. The interviewee, part of an ex-combatant dialogue group reflected an understanding of relationships involved, not only between potential protesting Republicans, but also of Loyalist mothers and their sons. The quote also illustrates the understanding of the importance of both the place and space of Belfast City Hall as the potential location of protest. Belfast City Hall carries significance as the location of the cenotaph, the war memorial where the homecoming would take place. The narrative frame of Loyalism holds strong historical ties to the battles of World War I which creates a potent symbolism. Finally, this interviewee also

reflects his understanding of time and timing in his statement that this is not the UDR (local army who were considered legitimate targets by the PIRA) and therefore these soldiers are not the enemy, these soldiers are coming home from Iraq and Afghanistan. This pattern makes up the context for action and demonstrates a layered phronetic understanding used to direct judgement about the potential for fault-lines to erupt. As this example illustrates, a potential extension of the phronetic lenses would be to use it as a tool of conflict analysis. In this case, used to analyse the context for intervention given the inherent ripeness for conflict.

Phronetic lenses might also be used to analyse whether particular intervention techniques, may or may not work in a given context. As discussed in Chapter 4 while the civil rights movement was effective in highlighting structural violence and resulted in legislative success, it was unable able to maintain its original nonviolent approach and was moved towards violence. Ruane and Todd (1996) suggest that the tactics of nonviolent civil disobedience were problematic in part because they were not germane. Marches while inspired by the US African American civil rights movement, in the context of Northern Ireland caused confusion and were "disturbing" to unionists:

> "The civil rights movement could not easily be fitted into unionist conceptual categories and they found it difficult to respond to it....[t]he tactic of the march increased the problems for unionists. Although an accepted, even celebrated mode of non-violent protest in the 1960's, its role in Northern Ireland was problematic" (Ruane and Todd, 1996 p. 127).

The same authors elaborate that the sectarian geography and the history of Protestant marching meant, "Civil rights marches which traversed Protestant territory, or any territory not seen as exclusively Catholic, were perceived as a direct challenge" (ibid, p.127). The result was that flashpoints areas created tensions and opportunities for escalated conflict. Bew and Gillespie (1999) suggest that the civil rights movement may have also suffered from a lack of Protestant leadership and Protestants believed that civil rights movement to be merely a front for the IRA. Although NICRA included Republicans, other members were linked to the Wolfe Tone Society, Trade Unionist Movement, Communist Party, moderate reformers and one young Unionist (Hall, 1988 p.3). In hindsight, a question may be asked

whether more representation from Protestants would have served in some way to mitigate Protestant suspicions.

Likewise, a micro-contextual case-study of October 5, 1968, described as a pivotal turning point of the civil rights movement (Taggart, 2004; Prince and Warner, 2012), when considered through the phronetic lenses may generate insights. Below each dimension is featured to demonstrate phronesis as a tool of analysis to view the context of events surrounding October 5, 1968.

Table 5**: Phronetic lenses as a tool of analysis**

Relationships:	Protestants viewed the leadership of NICRA with suspicion in part due to the lack of Protestant leadership (Bew and Gillespie, 1999). Derry civil rights organisations were known to local RUC commanders with each were well aware of the others tactics and approaches, by contrast those from the NICRA leadership were Belfast-based and therefore didn't know the local situation (Prince and Warner, 2012). Ruane and Todd suggest clashes between marchers and loyalists forced RUC to take sides stating RUC were "defenders of the Protestant community first, defenders of the Protestant state second, and normal policemen third" (Ruane and Todd, 1996).
Place-Space:	Sectarian geography enhanced the potential for marches to become flashpoints (Ruane and Todd, 1996).
Time-Timing	Many of the events of the civil rights era happened in a short window of time (October 5th- December 1968). By December of 1968, Bleakley writes that the emotional context required a cooling off period (Bleakley, 1972).
Fault lines:	Prince and Warner (2012) argue that Derry-Londonderry civil rights organisers were more radical and thus deliberately planned a marching route that might provoke a strong reaction by moving from the Protestant Waterside area up to the city centre near the war memorial (Prince and Warner, 2012).

Frame	Using civil disobedience as a tool may have challenged Protestants viewing it as a protest against the state. Walker has suggested that Protestants were culturally socialised to identify with and defend the state rather than challenge the laws of the state (Walker, 2012). Also, Ruane and Todd describe that there was little interpretative frame by which to understand marching as a form of non-violent protest and that civil rights as "not easily be fitted into unionist conceptual categories"(Ruane and Todd, 1996 p.127).

After applying a phronetic lens, light is shed on the context surrounding October 5, 1968 suggesting it was ripened for a rapid escalation of conflict. Overall, it suggests the possibility that techniques chose to advance social justice through civil rights marches and demonstrations and modelled after the US civil rights context, may have inadvertently escalated tensions when used in Northern Ireland. This combustive context may be a partial explanation for the volatility and dramatic escalation into violent manifestation of conflict, a turn of events that shifted the momentum in an increasingly dangerous and deadly direction.

8.2.2 Phronetic lenses: innovation in practice

Writing about professional practice, since the early 1970's Argyris and Schön have explored the processes by which practitioners become knowledge creators. Describing that practitioners employ tacitly theories-in-use in practice which guide their choices and judgment, they argue that making such knowledge explicit is key to reflective practice and that "when we formulate our theories-in-use we make explicit what we already know tacitly: we can test our explicit knowledge against our tacit knowledge…"(Argyris and Schön, 1974 p.11). Such perspectives on the interplay between tacit and explicit forms of knowledge echo a critique by authors Nonaka et al, writing about knowledge production within organisations. The thrust of their critique is that traditional western epistemologies view knowledge as absolute and static and fails to capture what they describe as "the relative,

dynamic, and humanistic dimensions of knowledge" (Nonaka et al., 2001 p.14). These authors contrast this with the Japanese concept of 'Ba,' which holds a view of knowledge as fluidly dynamic and as emergent. It is their view that innovative knowledge creation occurs out of a particular context and is a convergence of explicit and tacit forms of knowledge, writing: "Understanding this reciprocal relationship between explicit knowledge and tacit knowledge is key to understanding the knowledge-creation process" (ibid). While, the above authors are writing about knowledge production from a business management perspective, their conceptualisation of the potential of using both tacit and explicit forms of context knowledge is nonetheless relevant because it elucidates the innovative potential of using phronetic knowledge for peacebuilding.

Stories of practice which emerged from interviews for this research provided examples and evidence of such innovation. The following story describes the emergence of the idea for the mobile telephone network, an initiative which distributes mobile phones to key volunteers and workers on either sides of flashpoints to allow them to remain in contact to dispel rumours, share information to de-escalate tensions particularly along interface areas (Jarman and CDC, 1999; Hall, 2003; Jarman, 2005; profiled in Section 4.5). This initiative has been viewed as a successful development in the management of communal interface tensions:

> "I was sitting one day and I was talking to activist from the Nationalist community, and I said… I said, "Look can we not get a telephone tree, where everybody gets each others numbers and they can ring each other"? And this old guy [Name omitted] he said…"let me tell you a wee story, he said people don't want to give their numbers across. He said there was a guy, he was a milkman and he was delivering milk around North Belfast, to both Protestant [and] Catholic and he used to go and collect the money and he came to one house and the woman, Protestant woman said to him, "Look my son or my daughter is seeing someone from the other community. Can you give me a contact with Sinn Féin so I can check my child is safe going into that area?"
>
> [H]e said he didn't know anything about Sinn Féin but he went back into his community and he got a number for an incident centre and went back to the woman and said, "there's the number if you ring them they might be able to help you." This word got out and it was assumed by the Loyalist Unionist side that this guy was connected with Sinn Féin and he was shot dead. [T]hat's the kinda story that means we will not give each other personal details.

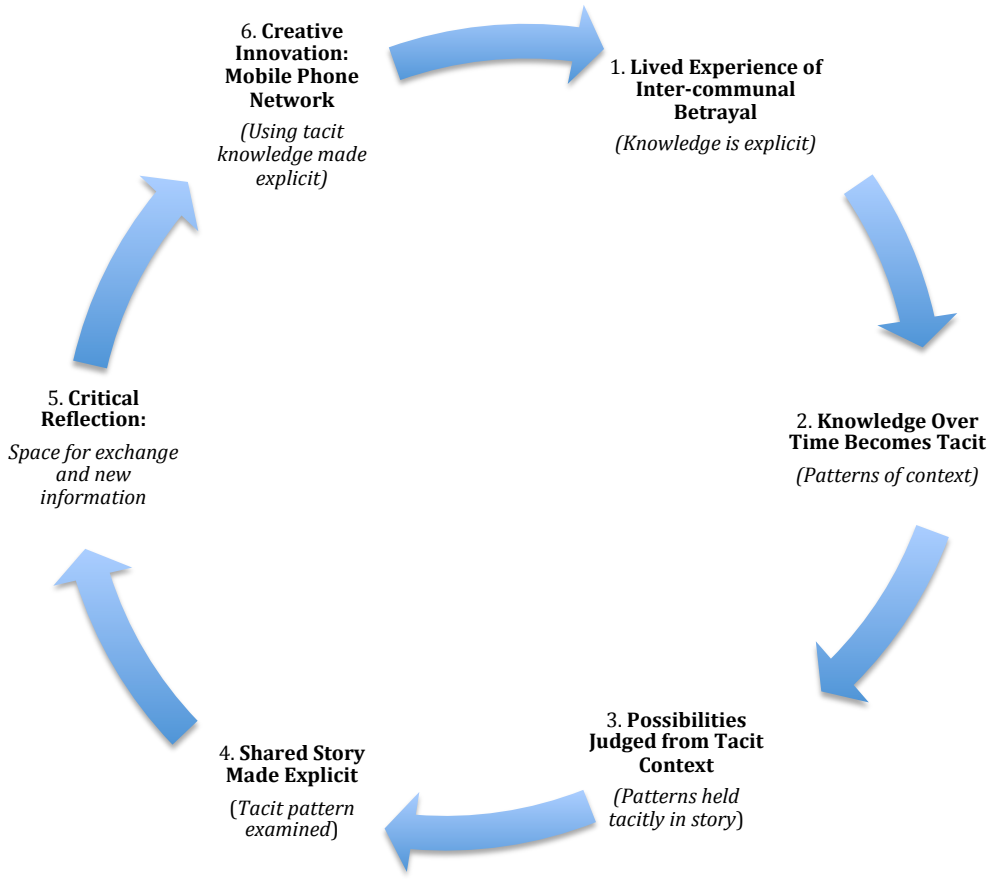
> So I thought about this Emily, for a long time. What if we could get mobile phones and we could give the mobile phones into an area, so it wasn't identified and we would give people the numbers and they would know I could ring you and we wouldn't know who was on the other end and say, is it true [verifying rumour]… that's where the mobile phone network came from." (Practitioner 2, Interface-based peacebuilding, Interview 12/4/2014)

The story illustrates the use of phronesis to innovate against the context of deep distrust, fear and danger originating from a lived experience of inter-communal betrayal. The recounting of the story of the death of a local milkman uncovers knowledge which presumably at the time of the death was known explicitly by those living in the local area, but which over time, becomes tacit. The lesson learned from the experience for those in the community was that it was unsafe to share personal information across the communal divide. In fact, it will get you killed. Once the story becomes explicit, the practitioner is able to use what was formerly tacit knowledge in combination with explicit knowledge to innovate. The practitioner acknowledges the barriers that exist but seeks a creative way to mitigate risk to find a practical solution to address the problem of a lack of direct communication. The diagram (Figure 5) and outline describe the ways that using both forms of knowledge, tacit and explicit, leads to innovation using the following process:

Phronetic knowledge creation cycle for innovation

1. Lived experience of intercommunal betrayal (*knowledge is explicit*).
2. Knowledge over time becomes tacit (*knowledge becomes a pattern of context*).
3. Possibilities judged from tacit context (*patterns held tacitly in story*).
4. Shared story made explicit (*tacit pattern examined*).
5. Critical reflection (*Space for exchange and new information to be considered*).
6. Innovation through developing a mobile phone network (*using tacit knowledge made explicit*).

Figure 5: **Phronetic knowledge creation cycle for innovation**



This knowledge creation cycle is not dissimilar from Lederach's (1995) models of elicitive training (Lederach, 1995 p.57). In fact, both utilise implicit and tacit knowledge as a source of discovery. Lederach's model describes building on implicit understandings of conflict to build relevancy into training, while the above model demonstrates that tacit and explicit knowledge are used to produce innovation, in this example, a mobile phone network. Each affirm the validation of the extant knowledge of those with practical lived experience of conflict. As Lederach writes: "It is trusting that participants have the capacity and creativity to identify, name, critique, and recreate models that correspond to needs they experience and identify" (ibid). In order to increase relevancy for innovation or training, it is however, necessary to first build upon tacit knowledge. It may next move into explicit knowledge through a process of critical reflection. This cycle further explains why interviewees reflected that outside intervention and exemplars could be useful when a space was created for critical reflection as often an outsider can ask questions that elicit important tacit knowledge. Making tacit knowledge explicit in a space of reflection was important for generating new insights.

8.2.3 Using phronesis to build relevant theory

As it was originally designed, this research aimed to build theory with practitioners. While this aspect of the research design was not carried out to the degree planned, theory building with practitioners took place on two occasions. While the mechanics of these meetings were discussed in the methodology chapter, this subsection will consider how these discussions contributed towards advancing possible theoretical development. As mentioned in the methodology chapter, the aim of theory building with practitioners using phronetic context-knowledge was, from the outset, modest. Rather than aiming for universal explanatory power the aspiration was instead focused on building locally relevant mid-range theory, not dissimilar from how Lederach conceptualises his theoretical contributions (Lederach, 1997).

The salience of the topic of trust, described in inductive stages of data analysis as catalytic to practice, made it the topic deemed most appropriate and rich for theory building. Stories of practice had evidenced that when peacebuilding had been deemed 'successful,' engagement had necessitated a degree of trust built and/or trustworthiness demonstrated. For example, establishment of trustworthiness through credibility (one concept linked to trustworthiness) was considered important both for the particular practitioner and any process of intervention. After using a matrix to track and map the locations of trust and distrust mentioned, it became clear that the practice identified that deep systemic distrust operated at all levels of society (Appendix 10). This provided salience and explanation as to why both perceptions and evidence of trustworthiness might be important. Data analysis revealed that when trust and trustworthiness was discussed it included four different usages, which I described as: 1) point-of-entry trust, 2) proxy-trust, 3) pragmatic trust, and 4) process trust (see Chapter 7, section 7.1).

In order to generate discussion in the theory-building sessions, two fictional case studies were used to generate initial discussion on dimensions of trust. Insights gained were then followed up and contrasted against the models of systemic distrust to interrogate and elucidate the model (For case-studies and theory building handout see Appendixes 11-13). What emerged over the course of these discussions was further conceptual development to elucidate why trust was important to practice. This included the theoretical insight that trust involved a calculation of risk, an element that had not featured in the previous model. As one of the theory-building participant asked, "Enough trust for what?" Recognition was given that gender, age, and locality were all factored into micro-calculations of particular risk levels and consequently, what level of trust was required. Discussions with the group also confirmed that the concepts of trustworthiness that I had identified were, in part, used to mitigate against the perceived risk. For example, if a credible leader (using what I described as proxy-trust) was involved in a peacebuilding project, the overall risk was mitigated as they had established bona fides in their context. Similarly, pragmatic trust was used to establish a conditional basis for joint inter-communal projects with tangible and material gain such as

employment, regeneration, safer areas, or financial investment; therefore the risk of engagement was mitigated. Practitioners reflected that when the risk level increased, the space for engagement retracted. Risk sharing was identified as one way to progress change when leadership might otherwise face isolation or become scapegoated. Finally, distinctions were discussed between distrust and mistrust and whether in fact, what was understood as trust might be better understood as managing distrust. The following diagrams represented in Figure 6 and Figure 7 reflect additional insights that theory-building discussions generated, evidencing the development of the ideas gained as a result of working with practitioners as part of a knowledge production process.

Figure 6: **Distrust-trust theory building model (post-practitioner input)**

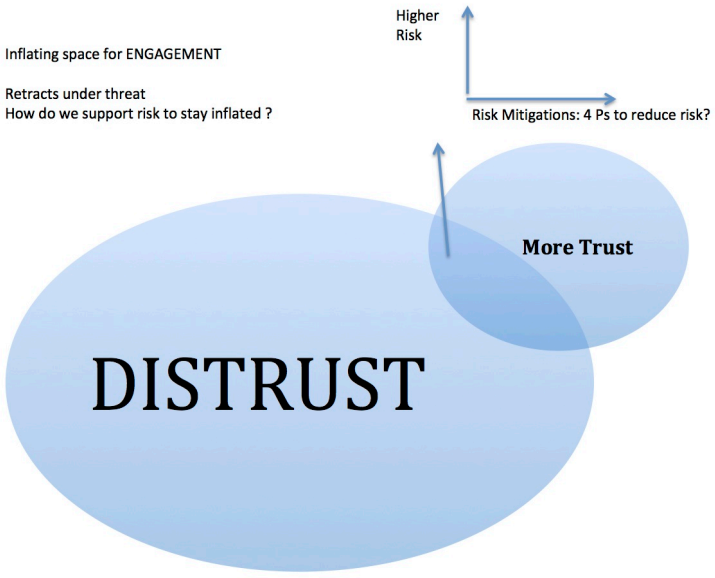
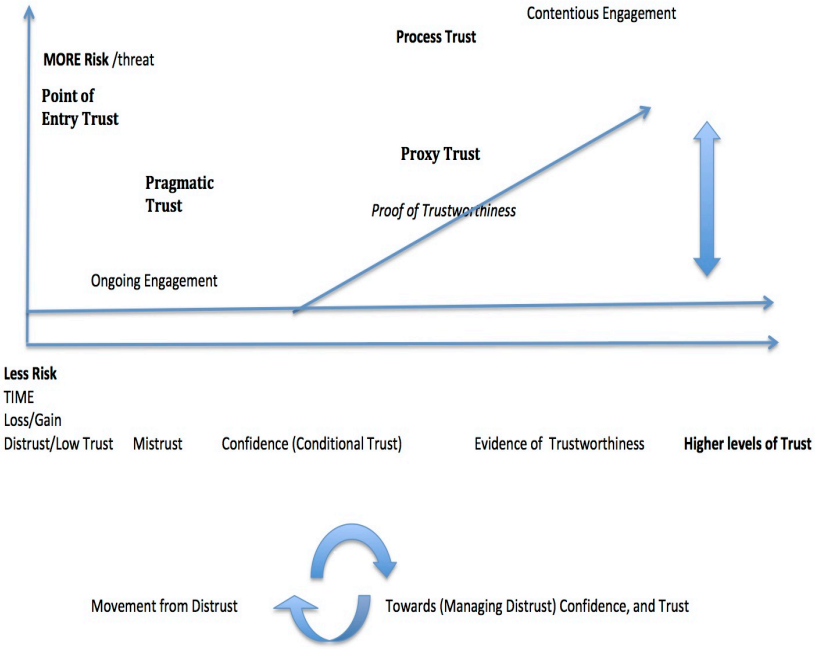


Figure 7: **Distrust-trust theory building model (post-practitioner input)**



Theory building with practitioners was truncated, with more future work needed to more fully elucidate and exploit the knowledge creation possibilities of these groups, however, these indicators were promising in their relevancy. As mentioned previously the theory building with practitioners had not necessarily intended to produce broadly universal or explanatory models but speak to the local context and the practice environment. The relevancy of the topic of trust was reinforced one month after the completion of the theory-building workshops (held in November 2016), when on January 9th 2017 Deputy First Minister Martin McGuinness resigned from his position, citing a lack of trust and accountability in the handling of a

renewable-energy scheme set up by the First Minister in her previous role as Minister for the Economy (Irish Times, 2017). As a result, the power-sharing collapsed and Northern Ireland remains at the time of writing, without a functioning power-sharing Executive or Legislative Assembly at Stormont. The collapse of the Executive came as a surprise to many. For example, a local publication established to document and review peacebuilding progress in Northern Ireland the Peace Monitoring report, in its 2016 edition began with a foreword by its chairperson, who wrote:

> "Devolution appears more secure than at any time in most people's living memory. And it is a power-sharing devolution- a genuine partnership between the largest political parties representing opinion across the community" (Osborne cited in Wilson, 2016 p.5).

Five months later, in early January 2017, this "genuine partnership" had ended. This quote is not used to fault those tasked with monitoring the peace with their lack of political prescience, merely to highlight that such a task, despite hard data indicators will never capture the full contextual picture in societies transitioning from violent conflict. Likewise, it also serves to illustrate that there are deep fragilities that remain even when peace *seems* to have stabilised. While the focus of this research was on grassroots and civil society based practitioners, the pervasiveness of the systemic distrust was evidenced as widespread. Thus, it is should not be surprising to see its permutation at a political level.

Interestingly, specific attention to the topic of trust and mechanisms to build trust or to demonstrate trustworthiness is generally under-theorised within the peacebuilding literature - a surprising omission given its pertinence to post-conflict societies. However, initial exploration into the literature on post conflict trust building suggests the two bear some inter-relationship systemically. According to Stiefel:

> "Societies emerging from war face a range of problems, all connected and urgent. But one overshadows and affects all the others: the destruction of relationships and the loss of trust, confidence, dignity and faith…If people do not trust each other and lack trust and confidence in government and in the rebuilding process in general, then the best rebuilding strategies are likely to fail" (Stiefel, 2001 pp.255-56).

Hamber and Kelly's (2004) work theorising reconciliation is one of the examples of peacebuilding theory that specifically mentions trust. The definition refers to the need to address issues of trust in strand three and in strand four of its five-stranded definition which defines reconciliation as:

1. Developing a shared vision of an interdependent society
2. Acknowledging and dealing with the past
3. Building positive relationships
4. Significant cultural and attitudinal change
5. Substantial social, economic, and political change
   (Hamber and Kelly, 2004 p.7)

An extended explanation of strand three, 'Building Positive Relationships' states that reconciliation involves:

> "Relationship building or renewal following violent conflict addressing issues of trust, prejudice, intolerance in this process, resulting in accepting commonalities and differences, and embracing and engaging with those who are different to us" (Hamber and Kelly, 2004 p.4).

The second reference is made under strand four, "Significant Cultural and Attitudinal Change" where they write that reconciliation may need to involve: "Changes in how people relate to, and their attitudes towards, one another. The culture of suspicion, fear, mistrust and violence is broken down and opportunities and space opened up in which people can hear and be heard" (Ibid). It is important that trust and mistrust is mentioned within the definition of reconciliation. However, given the salience of the findings that Northern Ireland operates out of a context of deep systemic distrust, it could be argued that a more significant emphasis needs placed on trust and trustworthiness as *catalytic* components necessary to underpin reconciliation. While it could be argued that trust is important in each strand, its salience to reconciliation could be made more explicit by adding it, for example, into strand three stating specifically "building positive relationships *characterised by trust and benchmarks of trustworthiness*." An elaborated explanation of the addition could include linked concepts such as integrity, credibility, accountability, transparency, inclusivity and commitment as

benchmarks of trustworthiness that would help to build trust. Without such trust, reconciliation is certainly unlikely or perhaps even impossible.

Issues of trust have also received little attention from politicians or policymakers. A search of The Programme for Government Consultation Document 2016-2021 (PfG) found only two times that trust, distrust, or mistrust is mentioned where it states that:

> "Respect underpins a cohesive and peaceful society and reflects equality and human rights principles. It relates to trust, relationship building and collaboration. It is therefore much more than just tolerance, lack of abuse and lack of discrimination" (Northern Ireland Executive, 2016 p. 120).

Clearly while there is acknowledgement of the relationships between respect and trust, the nature of the relationship is ill-defined, with the term 'respect' receiving a greater emphasis in the document. The document proposes the development of a 'respect index' to measure progress in its promotion (Northern Ireland Executive, 2016 p.121). While respect is clearly a vital part of building reconciliation and necessary for peacebuilding, a brief view comparing both terms in references made by interviewees finds that trust was spoken of one-third more often than respect- although respect is a topic that is much more broadly prominent in the PfG. The fact that trust only received two references in the PfG consultation document, suggests an underestimation of the degree by which effective governance and social cohesion may rely upon its durability and ductility. Building civil society trust in post-accord and post conflict societies is noted as important by Pouligny who writes:

> "[Post-conflict peacebuilding has] traditionally focused more on economic and physical infrastructures or on formal institutional processes, but have tended to forget that wars destroy not only buildings and bodies but also trust, hope, identity, family and social ties. In other words, insufficient attention has been paid to the radical transformations in political cultures and codes of conduct of the individuals and communities who have experienced mass violence, and the way these basic values and beliefs affect the way a state is conceived and governed" (Pouligny, 2005 p. 496).

In contrast to the PfG a recent report, *Galvanising the Peace* (2017) produced through a period of consultation across the region with networks of peacebuilding

practitioners, highlights the need to rebuild trust, as well as promote respect and reconciliation as its number one recommendation. The report states:

> "There is still a diverse array of civil society organisations that continue to work to build peace, both on their own and in partnership with other organisations, as well as with political parties, the institutions of governance and with statutory bodies. What they have in common is a belief that sustainable peace can only be based on relationships built on trust and respect and, through this, it will be possible to foster reconciliation, while at the same time tackling the hard issues within a framework of ethnic, social, political and cultural diversity" (Galvanising the Peace Network, 2017 pp. 10-11).

It is clear that peacebuilding practitioners and policymakers are not addressing the issue of trust similarly. However, the latter group are nonetheless producing policy with ambitious peacebuilding goals, which, if prioritised could be enhanced by trust. Instead, the *Galvanising the Peace* report highlights that that the timetable for the permanent dismantlement of peace walls by 2023, a policy goal mandated by government through T: BUC (2013) has caused anxieties in some communities (Galvanising the Peace Network, 2017). While the removal of walls is a laudable policy goal, it might be better facilitated if communities had trusted relationships with those in charge of statutory provisions in their communities. Where a deficit of trust already exists, distrust may more readily be extended to those charged with guiding the removal of peace walls. Likewise, a lack of consultation or engagement on such issues may consequently reinforce and/or will likely be reinforced by, a view that statutory bodies are not trustworthy. The analysis of the data from this doctoral research, particularly after using the trust matrix, suggests that this is a sentiment that already exists.

Initial reflections generated from the data in this research suggest that demonstrations of trustworthiness such as: wide access and inclusivity; mechanisms to ensure transparency, accountability and culpability; and reliability and commitment are all important process dimensions necessary to build trust. Benchmarking markers of trustworthiness may be a necessary and useful consideration for policy-makers whose task in governance is compounded in multiple ways by its post-conflict context. Such matters will be increasingly

significant if bodies and mechanisms for dealing with historical legacy issues outlined in the Stormont House Agreement (SHA) are to be implemented, such as the Historical Investigation Unit, Independent Commission on Information Retrieval, and the Oral History Archive (SHA, 2014). Bodies such as these, in order to be considered legitimate will likely rely on demonstrations and evidence of their trustworthiness.

8.3. Revisiting key debates on knowledge for peacebuilding

In light of arguments presented here that the conceptualisation of phronesis is important for peacebuilding and that it holds explanatory power for a better understanding of civil society and grassroots peacebuilding, as well as scope for knowledge creation, it is now useful to consider how each of these arguments relate to, or provide new insights concerning the key debates identified in the literature review from Chapter 2. Specifically, these debates centred on: Who is a peacebuilder, and what type of knowledge do they have or need to have, to build peace? The first question, who is a peacebuilder, focused on whether the grassroots and civil society is a viable location for producing valid and valuable knowledge for peace, or whether as issues of day-to-day survival are too urgent as Brewer suggests (Brewer, 2010 p.54) or too biased and entrenched- too 'uncivil' (Belloni, 2010). This question is made more important by traction and interest generated in bottom-up 'locally-led" approaches, as such approaches will be will be meaningless if those at the 'bottom' are not valued for their judgement or knowledge for peace.

The findings of this research can make a contribution to this debate by concluding that those involved in grassroots and civil society peacebuilding hold valid and valuable knowledge for peace. In fact, they are uniquely equipped to do so, because their location at the coalface places them at the intersection of both the deep challenges and possibilities for change. However, to fully understand and explain the nature of this location, and to better appreciate its value and validity, an epistemological rediscovery is necessary. Hence, phronesis, when considered as an epistemology of practice provides a conceptual lens to sharpen the view. As a

frame, phronesis provides explanatory power and knowledge creation capabilities. Phronesis as a term brings attention to a deeper understanding of nuances of context held both tacitly and explicitly, and how context is judged (embodied in multiple ways of knowing). Importantly, the research has identified that those working to promote changes in civil society and at the grassroots use this form of knowledge to increase relevancy and efficacy.

Phronesis as a concept helps to explain but not necessarily avoid, tensions. Ontological insights from phronesis, however, brings a fresh perspective illustrating that judgments about 'what to do,' agency and actions aimed at peacebuilding are contingent upon one's view of their particular context. In this regard, research findings shed light on the inherent tensions this location brings. Speaking out in such small socially dense quarters can have profound implications, for example, if one's neighbour is involved as a protagonist in armed conflict, peacebuilding activism may be gauged accordingly. Peacebuilding in the context of division requires a nuanced navigation and balancing act. As one practitioner working with a mixed community noted, people can have a great friendship with their neighbours and 'get on,' but on another level- can't stand one another. This complexity echoes Pouligny's critique that too often notions of civil society can serve to take a reductionist and narrow view, missing a richness of diversity and social ties that exist within civil societies facing conflict (Pouligny, 2005). Pouligny describes this as fluidity that individual domestic actors may have within their societal networks. Domestic actors, it is argued, may hold multiple roles, for example, a local community worker may also be part of networks affiliated with aligned political movements (Pouligny, 2005 p. 499). For this reason, scope for peacebuilding changes at this level are inevitably weighed up against the inherent risks or consequences involved for oneself and ones embedded networks. As an illustration, one interviewee working within trade unions from a Catholic Nationalist background, recalled that his own father had slammed the door in his face when he took a public position supporting the newly formed Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI).

Practice stories also illustrated the necessity for understanding and working with this type of complexity when aiming to promote and support change processes within organisations. One practitioner recalled working with high-ranking members of both the police and the Orange Order, two institutions accused of historical intransigence to change. One insight generated by such experiences was the need to work systemically and to build trust and buy-in within each part of the system otherwise progress would be blocked. This was important because if individual leaders were willing to take risks but did not have the trust of others in the system, they would find themselves scapegoated for 'sticking their head above the parapet' by their own networks.

This latter point also speaks to another insight generated from the research that carries paradoxical implications. Lederach's conceptual development of integrated peacebuilding describes that activity and leadership is necessary at all levels of society (Track I, II, and III). Each level is viewed as offering scope for multiple peacebuilding processes and approaches aimed at working across all lines of division in a conflict setting (Lederach, 1997). As covered in Chapter 2, Lederach allocates a particular role to those at the middle-range level (Track II) viewing this location as one that holds the potential to connect both the grassroots and political levels in peacebuilding. This research found evidence that mid-level leadership can be a successful conduit, for example, as profiled in the back channel negotiations detailed in Chapter 4. As a model, 'integrated peacebuilding' may nevertheless underestimate the difficulty for building and maintaining horizontal and vertical relationships in contexts of a pervasive systemic distrust. Middle-range leaders who aim to connect levels of peacebuilding may find the very relationships they have painstakingly developed, if openly known, also subject them to distrust and suspicion. As mentioned in Chapter 6, one interviewee recounted that when he demonstrated that he had contacts both within local communities and with high-level senior police, this individual became a source of distrust because each viewed that the practitioner "had to be working to someone's agenda" (Practitioner 4, Mediation, Interviewed 8/12/14). In conclusion, evidence from this research finds that actors are involved in effective peacebuilding at the local level. However, truly

'integrated peacebuilding' may be more limited if and when interveners are both embedded in and work within contexts of deep systemic distrust. Mitigated at times by evidence of trustworthiness, peacebuilding agency may also be curtailed due to being perceived as untrustworthy in a given particular conflict context. However the very knowledge which may limit agency at times, is however, valid and valuable in order for peacebuilding to be considered contextually relevant and impactful.

A second debate in the literature, as outlined in Chapter 2, considered what type of knowledge was most valuable for peacebuilding. The debate charges that due in part to the professionalisation and bureaucratic development of peace interventions, thematic, skilled or technical knowledge are privileged over local knowledge, as the former is claimed to be more transferable across differing contexts (Autesserre, 2014). The literature has placed this debate as an international and globalized outgrowth of the liberal peace agenda, and given that the bulk of the peacebuilding in Northern Ireland had been 'locally-led' the debate over international outsider versus local insider is not exactly germane. Despite this, within the community of peacebuilders in Northern Ireland questions of ownership remain. There is a perception, particularly since the influx of EU funds, among some interviewees that a professionalised peace industry has been created. As one interviewee for this research stated:

> "I sort of decry the professionalising of community relations work, you know, it's become I think, everybody's become a community relations expert, more people running community relations and conflict resolution programmes. But the really successful relationships have a very high level of community involvement, are not professionalised to the same extent. I think to a large extent the European programme was responsible for that, they created this huge kind of, I mean the number of people employed through those programmes as professionals is unbelievable" (Practitioner 18, Funding Sector, Interviewed 17/4/15).

As mentioned previously, twenty years ago, Lampen (1995) acknowledged a concern even at that stage, that "professionalism and intellectualism" could displace local grassroots activists (Lampen, 1995 p.144). Fears were also voiced that professionalisation would bring externally-based criteria for measuring outcomes that local peacebuilders feel may or may not accurately reflect realities on the

ground, or that a need for hard empirical results would direct the work in ways that would impede rather than progress peacebuilding.

Community activists have described that rising professionalisation and bureaucratic nature of funding has privileged organisations with technical and administrative knowledge, over insider, more localised knowledge. Professionalising meant that paid positions called for specialized knowledge that locals did not have, which meant those filling the jobs came from outside the area and did not always know the more nuanced conflict dynamics. One local well-known community-based peace activist, May Blood (made a Baroness because of her years of grassroots peacebuilding) quoted by Hall in 2005, describes this dynamic:

> "As funding grew bigger and bigger in the 1990's organizations were forced to become more and more professional. Then it eventually came about that community development in an area was no longer done by local people: you had a consultant who came in and told you how it should be done and then you had four or five professional people- who in some cases didn't live in the area-who took the jobs and they in turn told you what should be done" (Hall, 2005 p.9).

A concern is that the technocratic thrust of a professionalised peace may either obscure or elide the type of knowledge, phronesis, that practitioners have found useful in their peacebuilding but that may not "measure up" by a technocratic yardstick. Revisiting Schön (1983), it could be characterised that the professionalization of peacebuilding, embedded with the dominance of technical-rational positivist epistemology has inadvertently obscured and subordinated the practical knowledge of those who had been working over the years locally.

Going back to a metaphor used earlier about who is in the peacebuilding driver seat in Northern Ireland, one might suggest that while the locals were in the driver seat, an influx of significant level of funding in a relatively short amount of time shifted the practice context towards more bureaucratic trends associated with professionalisation. The influx of funds did two things to thwart the use of phronetic knowledge; firstly it attracted a flurry of new drivers eager to take over the wheel, but perhaps lacking some of the vocational commitment or phronetic knowledge gained previously. Secondly, accompanied by a more burdened administrator in the

passenger seat, local peacebuilders could not drive the route they thought best because it was a toll road and three comparative quotes were necessary first to justify value for money. It might even be suggested progress was diverted and stunted when continuous stops had to be made to fill out the necessary paperwork. Such a dynamic has become increasingly problematic as funding has begun to contract (Wilson, 2016 p.141).

Clearly, the politics of peacebuilding knowledge production should not aim to privilege context-knowledge over technical or theoretical knowledge. It is more to point that each are important and bring strengths to peacebuilding. However, even in the context of Northern Ireland which has had locally-led peacebuilding, increasingly funding practices and professionalisation may inadvertently steered peacebuilding away from paying attention to or shaping peacebuilding that is responsive to context. If peacebuilding is only viewed as the job of a "professional," local ownership and relevancy are likewise reduced.

8.4 Challenges of phronesis as an epistemology of practice

While the thrust of the argument in this chapter was aimed at demonstrating the validity and usefulness of phronesis and discussing its contribution to key debates, every concept has its limitations. For example, does a reliance on experience and situational knowledge (thus appearing muddle-headed and incoherent), limit its transferability or its broader explanatory power? Does its organic fluidity and circularity defy current neo-liberal techno-rational paradigms concerned to demonstrate outcomes, measurability and value for money? Likewise, in practice contexts, might the concept be prone to greater parochialism, knowledge gate-keeping or more problematically lend itself to replication of status quo conflict dynamics, or by reifying oppressive social structures? Or even provide an excuse for lazy practitioners to avoid a healthy interrogation of their own practice?

8.4.1 Phronesis appears incoherent and doesn't measure up

From the outset this research was interested to build and consolidate theory from lived experience and applied peacebuilding practice. In the original research design one of the articulated aims of the research project was to consolidate and add coherency to what had been learned by practitioners working on the ground. It was hoped that the research might address the lack of coherency and consolidation in the local field, a key challenge identified in peacebuilding practice (Kelly, 2012; Cochrane, 2001a; Cochrane and Dunn, 2002). Consolidated theory was not, in the end, an outcome of this research. However, the discovery of phronesis as a guiding epistemology of practice has added a coherency to this named incoherency. In other words, its incoherency is explained as a priority given not to universals but to the particular contexts. This insight has given us an alternative way of viewing peacebuilding practice in both its historical role and 'impact' as described in Chapter 4. However, it also has afforded explanation as to why 'impact' is difficult to measure when using a phronetic epistemology of practice. It also offers another explanation for a lack of methodological clarity as to "what has worked and why" in local peacebuilding practice (Kelly, 2012). With an emphasis on judging context as a primary determinant and drawing on embodied and embedded forms of knowing, viewing outcomes more organically, a phronetic orientation in practice challenges and resists linear notions of impact or methodological consolidation. This finding extends and augments previously identified barriers preventing practitioners or academics from building localised theory such as increased professionalisation or academic disregard for practice (Stanton and Kelly, 2015). The epistemology of phronesis may act as a natural self-limiting barrier to theoretical or methodological consolidation, with some practitioners actively rejecting a normative desire for generalisability.

As stated earlier, peacebuilding, as it has become increasingly professionalised has taken on a techno-rational or 'technocratic' thrust (Mac Ginty, 2012; Chandler, 2017). Theoretical coherence, demonstrable evidence of 'impact' is part and parcel of building an evidence base to justify, account for and measure peacebuilding.

While, demonstrating value for public monies or to private donors is a necessary expectation, there are dimensions of phronesis that do not easily measure up. However, this is not to say they are not valuable. In fact, it may be that what is not easily measured may be of importance but not easily seen. For example, context is not easily measurable. Practitioners reflected a nuanced understanding of their context as one of deep distrust, evident through the data analysis and by using a trust matrix. However, such a finding ran in contrast to common perceptions, as mentioned devolved government had been perceived to be its most stable in "living memory" (Osborne quoted in Wilson, 2016 p.5). An official opposition had been established during the previous local election period and politically speaking, there was reason to believe the political power-sharing arrangements had stabilised. While not easily measurable initially, the deep distrust became more clearly visible several months later in December 2016 as the Renewable Heating Initiative (RHI) led to the January resignation of Deputy First Minister Martin McGuinness.

8.4.2 Phronesis risks insularity

The purpose of identifying phronesis is not to advocate for its privileging to the exclusion of techne and episteme, skills and theories, but to equally validate phronesis. If amplifying and empowering phronesis resulted in the subordination of episteme and techne it would be counter-productive and potentially problematic. Such a reversal could manifest as parochialism in its more benign form, or on the more nefarious end of the spectrum it could serve as a form of knowledge gate-keeping with an aim toward power and control. Those intent on maintaining power and the status quo may challenge normative universals as not being contextually relevant or to justify and maintain or perpetrate harms and injustices. Importantly, Northern Ireland is no stranger to the experience of gate-keepers looking to maintain control in communities through fear and intimidation, whose interests it would serve to have a mechanism to legitimise their own prejudices, biases or power base. For example, such a critique has been levied against individuals who

wear two hats by claiming to advocate for their communities but doing so while retaining links to paramilitarism (Galvanising the Peace Network, 2017 p.15).

A related concern and limitation emerges in considering again the concept of habitus (Bourdieu, 1990) which I have used in this conceptualisation of phronesis. Habitus has a generative function that serves to restructure itself; therefore, phronesis used as a source of knowledge for change initiatives may carry inherent growth inhibitors- avoiding choices that do not make sense in the context. Eraut writes that for those who have reached a high level of tacit knowledge and expertise, it can present a challenge when there is a need to change "long established approaches to situation understanding, rapid decision-making and routine practices" (Eraut, 2009 p.4). This may lead to a discarding of ideas or initiatives that might not seem relevant or congruent with the habitus but that might have actually been helpful. It may result in tried and true practice replicated beyond its use, and a fresh engagement in a new and developing context. For example, one of the practitioners interviewed for this research alluded to such a dynamic by reflecting that using a non-alcoholic venue, for residentially-based group-work with ex-combatant dialogue was, although possibly more appropriate, could be a challenge. Their perception was that such group-work would be more likely to work better in a hotel which had access to a bar as that was a feature that might impact participation otherwise.

8.4.3. Phronesis as reinforcing oppression or unreflective practice?

A final limitation and possible critique of phronesis runs in a parallel track to the limitations posed by habitus, but is more specifically informed by the Marxist thinkers. For example, Gramsci (1971) considered that common sense was both inclusive of embedded oppressions and a product of them. In this view, hegemony maintained through the production of culture, values and ideas which all filtered down to become 'common-sense' serving to preserve the status quo. This created an internal contradiction with the every-day lives and realities of the peasants and working-class, leaving them valuing that which they could not have, and served to

maintain the status quo. For Gramsci, this contradiction created a false-consciousness and a fragmented identity for the working-class masses of society:

> "And is it not frequently the case that there is a contradiction between one's intellectual choice and one's mode of conduct?....In these cases the contrast between thought and action cannot but be the expression of profounder contrast of a social historical order… this same group has, for reasons of submission and intellectual subordination, adopted a conception which is not its own, but borrowed from another group" (Gramsci, 1971 pp. 326-327)

Recognising that only those who have become awake to their own oppression can work for their emancipation he expanded his view of intellectuals, arguing that what is needed in order to create counter-hegemony is organic intellectuals within the working-class. Only those who have recognised the inherent contradictions between their everyday lives and the values and norms they have absorbed through the dominant cultural and social hegemony of the ruling elites can become organic intellectuals, critiquing the "common-sense' of their oppression.

In this conceptualisation, phronesis if understood as similar to Gramsci's view of common-sense, may also be considered to be embedded in oppressive structures and relationships that needed to be critically challenged in order to become emancipatory. However, if organic intellectuals become activists and remain with their own, they are often better placed, Gramsci suggests, to know how to animate and organise more effectively at this level. Strictly speaking one might argue that organic intellectuals are able to use their phronetic knowledge for critical action as a result of their consciousness raising and therefore collectively challenge aspects of 'common-sense' that are oppressive. In this regard, phronetic knowledge, it could be argued, could be both the source and necessary response to challenge and interrogate internalised forms of oppression. One example of someone perceived able to take such a role was the late David Ervine, a Northern Irish politician and progressive Loyalist. Ervine was cited several times by interviewees who viewed him as an example of a leader uniquely able to speak credibly to his own Loyalist constituency, critique Unionism and bridge build with Republican activists.

A final critique is that by defining and conceptualising phronesis as a form of knowledge that does not rely on theory or skills (which are more easily and objectively measured), a danger may exist that it could be used to avoid practice interrogation. Phronesis, if used to the exclusion of theory and skill, would certainly as mentioned previously, risk serving to reinforce oppressions, maintain power imbalances, and could perpetuate poor or ineffectual practice. If abused, phronesis could become an excuse used to explain why a particular practice is unquestioningly replicated, or methodologies germane in earlier years are left stale and unexamined. Therefore, necessary accountability mechanisms to prevent lazy or ineffective practice would need considered. However, it is also true that if phronesis were as equally valued for knowledge production as techne and episteme, it would be more likely therefore to be more deeply interrogated through knowledge production. If practitioners were valued for their knowledge production, it could be argued that they would become more reflective and accountable, as knowledge production would require interrogation about why and how particular practice decisions and judgments are made.

Conclusion

This chapter was intended to consider the utility of the concept of phronesis and consider what it may add to the practice and theory of peacebuilding and conflict transformation. The chapter has argued that as a concept phronesis offers an explanatory power and expands current discussion on the agency of actors working within grassroots and civil-society peacebuilding. In this regard, it argued that those working and living within their own conflict context cannot necessarily depend on 'universal' rules but use phronesis in their daily judgments to navigate particular conflict contexts. Phronesis was also argued to have knowledge production value and a demonstration of its role in innovation was given with the development of mobile phone for peacebuilding by using an interaction between forms of tacit and explicit knowledge. Its value for theory production was also explored by discussing theory building with practitioners and how their knowledge was used, in reaction to

a fictional case study, to expand and develop conceptual understandings of necessary dimensions of trust needed in an intervention. Finally, the chapter considered new insights gained on current knowledge debates in light of the introduction of the concept of phronesis and concluded by acknowledging areas of tensions and its limitations.

Chapter 9: Implications and conclusions

Introduction

After considering the concept for its utility, strengths and weaknesses, the conclusion has been reached that the conceptualising of phronesis has important relevance for knowledge production in the fields of peace studies and conflict transformation. This final chapter seeks to offer summary reflections and elaboration of this view and as well as to consider possible implications for both academic theory and practice. It begins by recapping the findings of the research, moves toward exploring how the research informs and augments current academic and practice debates and finally, concludes with considerations for future research.

Phronesis, or practical wisdom as a concept developed in this thesis through insights grounded in Aristotelian philosophy but supported by multidisciplinary literature within social science, is conceptualised as a form of knowledge that is:

- *Experienced*
- *Embodied*
- *Organically developed through experimentation*
- *Uses tacit recognition of context patterns and*
- *Context-relational judgements*

Phronesis draws heavily from lived experience. Employing multiple forms of knowing, it is an epistemology that utilises an integration of both subjective and objective experience. Knowledge is embodied and gut instincts and intuitive knowledge are valued. This responsiveness is a necessary tool for scanning and reading the nuances of context and lends itself to experimentation and organic, fluid development. Phronesis, reading nuance, draws on explicit but also tacitly held pattern recognition of context to guide action for the 'particular.' Context, however, may be better understood in this regard as an ecology of relationships which form patterns in a given habitus. Judgments about 'what to do' are drawn from the tacit recognition of meaning drawn in the interpretation of the patterns of context.

Pattern recognition informs choices in particular situations, and is processed fluidly and intuitively against what may or may not be viewed as possible in the given context. Difficult to name explicitly or to easily describe in words, such judgments illustrate an understanding of 'the context for action.'

Thus conceptualised, phronesis was evidenced in the findings of the research as a primary epistemology of practice used by grassroots and civil society peacebuilders to enhance, lever and lubricate social change. The research also evidenced the value of phronetic forms of knowledge for peacebuilding, demonstrating its usefulness for explanation, as a tool of analysis, innovation and for theory building. Discussion identified that while phronesis brought valuable local context knowledge it did not negate the need for robust interaction with other forms of knowledge- such as skills-based and theory-based knowledge, as it could be clearly problematic to solely rely on phronesis to inform peacebuilding. However, while each form of knowledge is important, research evidences that currently phronesis is invisible, subordinated and undervalued. Practitioners interviewed for the research stated their insights generated from practical knowledge are currently elided and sidelined. This may be exacerbated by technocratic epistemologies of practice, which currently dominate the field. The current invisibility of the concept of phronesis is problematic as it leaves an important form of knowledge deemed necessary for practice, unidentified. The conceptualisation of phronesis, therefore, has been an important outcome of this thesis.

9.1 Implications for peacebuilding theory

It is also argued here that the conceptualisation of phronesis and its evidence as a primary epistemology of practice by actors working within grassroots and within civil society makes an important contribution to key scholarly debates on knowledge for peacebuilding. Phronesis levels the knowledge production field in order to anchor practical, experience-based *local knowledge* with *context*- while simultaneously extending both conceptualisations. It may address a critique levelled at the critical peace school that while liberal peacebuilding has it flaws, the baby

should not be thrown out with the bathwater, but instead as Paris suggests, seek to consider alternate *modes* or *methods* of intervention within a liberal peacebuilding framework (Paris, 2010 p. 356). For example, if phronesis is considered as a form of nuanced local context-knowledge which must be given equal value alongside theory and skill (episteme and techne) interventions could be designed to maximise their collective strength. That all forms are necessary is a point made clearer by the discussion of the ways that phronesis could be abused to reinforce oppressions, to serve to legitimise power-bases, or excuse unreflective practice. Naming phronesis opens the door to both its inherent insights and necessary critiques. This may serve to meet some challenge, for example, on the nature of the 'local' that "more research is needed on the sources of local legitimacy in peacebuilding" (Paris, 2010 pp. 356-357) that "avoids simplistic bromides about the need for greater local ownership or emancipation" (ibid, pp.363-364).

Phronesis- now conceptualised, offers views from a perspective previously invisible. Considering first the phronetic lens and its contribution to academic investigations, the broad implication is that this lens creates new insights on civil society peacebuilding practice and its potential for knowledge production. However, by expanding knowledge to include *'*ways of knowing' that are subjective, embodied and formed by experience, informed by the location and perspective of being embedded, the views now visible from the phronetic lens demonstrate nuanced insights of both *judgment* and *context.* These new insights reveal more complex understandings of context as understood from an embedded location of five intersecting dimensions: relationships, place-space, time-timing, frame and fault-lines. The knowledge of how these dimensions of context fit together demonstrates both explicit and implicit forms of knowledge of patterns of context. Pattern recognition, viewed from within the embedded location, in part, informs and determines judgment about the context-for-action.

This more nuanced view of context does two things for grassroots and civil society peacebuilding that both speak to questions of 'whose knowledge counts' and 'what kind of knowledge' matters in peacebuilding. It adds *explanation* to the complexity of this location, and establishes the *necessity* of the knowledge these actors bring to

peacebuilding change processes. In other words, it explains the constraints and the parameters of action for those who are embedded, for example, local actors working within their own contexts. Knowing the relationships they hold with others and how they are situated may either increase or decrease agency or choices of what may seem possible. However, it also highlights the transformative dimensions of this same deep-context knowledge, which holds great potential to increase relevant and sustainable local peacebuilding.

Consequently, contributions made by phronesis to an increased understanding of civil society peacebuilding also create implications for the debate on local knowledge. In effect, this finding amplifies the need to use local knowledge, as it is a necessary component in order to build the type of in-depth nuanced context-knowledge contained in phronesis. Phronesis also adds weight to the argument for using local knowledge with the additional lens it offers to explain how context informs the judgment-of-action. However, it also extends our understanding of context to include tacit forms of knowledge. Judgement-of-action contains necessary tacit knowledge of context-gained by experience. For this reason, implications from this research have the potential to make a contribution to the peacebuilding literature that looks at bottom-up peacebuilding and debates over local knowledge and 'everyday' peacebuilding (Donais, 2009; 2012; Odendaal, 2013; Mac Ginty, 2012, 2013; Autessere, 2014; Mac Ginty and Firchow, 2016).

Of particular relevance is the argument that those who are living in conflict zones have developed the ability to adapt and innovate to manage day-to-day life. By demonstrating that phronetic knowledge is used and useful as a lens for explanation, analysis, innovation and theory building, evidence is provided to further demonstrate the "creativity and ingenuity" to which Mac Ginty refers (Mac Ginty, 2014). In doing so, it affirms that this type of knowledge employed in navigating the conflict terrain is also a body of knowledge that can be tapped to produce and create relevant and innovative knowledge for peacebuilding.

Demonstrating its knowledge production value for peacebuilding, however, is not its sole significance. Actors working at the civil society and grassroots level cite this

form of knowledge as of primary importance when seeking to make relevant and contextually appropriate judgments about what to do to facilitate change. This view suggests optimism, demonstrating Mac Ginty's argument that the local knowledge of the 'everyday' peace does hold potential for peace formation beyond a 'negative peace' (Mac Ginty, 2014). Examples from this research suggest that using context-knowledge gained from the 'everyday' has the potential to be transformative, providing practitioners with knowledge they have found vital for knowing how to 'use the context to change the context.' In fact, Mac Ginty's typology of "*Everyday Peace Activity*" (Mac Ginty, 2014) can be augmented by using examples from this research to illustrate (Figure 7). In some cases, this may mean making tacit knowledge explicit as part of a transformation process.

Figure 8: **Augmented Typology of Everyday Peace Activity** (Adapted from Mac Ginty, 2014)

Mac Ginty (2014)	Mac Ginty (2014)	**Examples of Phronetic Usage for Transformation**
Avoidance	Contentious topics of conversation Offensive displays High risk people and place Escapism into subcultures Not drawing attention to oneself Live in the present	• Peacebuilding intervention encourages dialogue by asking individual to keep contentious ethnic/identity visible- "Their coats on" [ethnic identifiers] and use language they would normally avoid in mixed company, i.e. 'the war' or 'terrorist campaign' to better understand different experiences and worldviews. • Deliberate risk taken to gain credibility for peacebuilding change (i.e. former combatants brought on board to restorative justice projects as transition from conflict or DDR) • Acknowledging and engaging the reality of high risk can lead to innovation (i.e. mobile phone networks in interface areas). • Use of 'under the radar' to build networks that provide space for new or potentially risky ideas to be explored at incubation stages; informal meetings and ideas can be tested for example, in pre-negotiation years. • Networks can also be useful conduits for information or for gauging how out-group may react prior to formalizing peacebuilding.
Ambiguity	Concealing signifiers of identity Non-observance or 'not seeing Dissembly in speech and actions	• Non-observance and 'not seeing' allows those who would not normally be expected to work together or trust one another due to their backgrounds, political affiliations, or family connections to work on jointly beneficial projects (i.e. women whose husbands were former enemy combatants and/or a victims of conflict together to advocate on cross-cutting issues or family support). Each 'know' but don't talk about the past.
Ritualised Politeness	System of Manners	• Creates rituals across divides that can yield important symbolic power such as hospitality gestures (cups of tea offered to former enemies), eating meals together, attending former enemies funerals or vigils (Ex-hunger striker attending a vigil for a Catholic Policeman shot by dissident Republicans).
Telling	Ethnically informed identification and social ordering	• Interpretation and insights into worldview framing that can act to de-escalate potential conflict or create empathy across divides, particularly useful to explain each side's own community view of issues or understand view of "other."
Blame Deferring	Shifting blame to outsiders to appear more socially acceptable	• Face saving mechanism to keep potential change catalysts, Pied pipers or gatekeepers on board who might otherwise act to block progress.

It is hoped that by demonstrating the value and validity of locally-based practical knowledge, as part and parcel of phronesis that it creates a bridge back to practice. The literature that germinates from the critical peace school is compelling, challenging, and insightful. However, given the grave need there is remaining day and daily for locally-authored and contextually relevant peacebuilding, if phronesis could coax such minds to move from a perceived ambivalence (Paffenholz, 2015), it would likely create an even richer, more relevant and profound peacebuilding scholarship and practice.

Likewise, the conceptualisation of phronesis has demonstrated relevance to scholarly debates about the role of grassroots and civil society in peacebuilding in the case of Northern Ireland. The literature on Northern Ireland primary suggests an inconclusive view as to the role of civil society peacebuilding, particularly when judged by its role in the political peace process. As previously stated, scholars describe the role of civil society peacebuilders as not unimportant- but limited (Cochrane and Dunn, 2002; Guelke, 2003; McCartney, 1999; Potter, 2006).

The conceptualisation of phronesis challenges this view (as explained in Chapter 4). It builds an alternative perspective and illustrates that peacebuilding agency is a calculation of the context-for-action, and judgment is informed by fluctuating sets of variables. Variables include a nuanced understanding of context named as: place-space, judgments of time and timing, dynamics of relationships and frames of meaning, all of which are considered against local fault lines. While agency for peacebuilding in this context may operate, as Mac Ginty states, under the radar out of necessity, this research suggests that there is also wisdom being demonstrated when assessing what is needed to shift context in order to progress social change. Taking such context change into consideration, the task of peacebuilding necessarily as Lederach suggests, becomes a longer endeavour and requires decade thinking, as he writes: “Decade thinking is not easy, but in my mind, is absolutely critical for peacebuilding” (Lederach, 1995 p.13). The metaphor used frequently in interviews, “two-step forwards one step-back” implies that even when the pace of change is slow- movement continues, and according to Aristotle, time and experience builds phronesis. Fitzduff and Williams’s (2007) research which presents one of the more

optimistic view of the role and importance of civil society activity suggests that this long-term view was important in building commitment towards peace in Northern Ireland:

> "Several interlocutors upheld the importance of basing peace work on criteria other than immediate impact. They pointed to the long years and faithful endeavour of groups like Corrymeela, of sectors like community development and trade unions, of the slow growth of integrated education, and so many individuals who asked that their loved one's death not be avenged so that the cycle of violence might end. In their view, some of the impact really is cumulative, it comes with quiet determination over a long time by people whose names may never be known. The visible initiatives have impact against a backdrop changed by small acts of courage" (Fitzduff and Williams, 2007 p.27).

In Northern Ireland the commitment of individuals and groups over the long-term, enabled their credibility to become established and was called on over the years at sensitive times to oversee decommissioning, intervene in local long-standing parading disputes, mediate in prisons, and shepherd consultations on grappling with the legacy and aftermath of the Troubles. These individuals were not (always) chosen for their mediation expertise or skills or the strongest grasp on peace theories but for their personal integrity established and gained by experience- chosen for their practical wisdom.

9.2. Implications for practice

The finding that practitioners use phronetic knowledge to navigate, design, lever and lubricate change processes emphasises the primacy of context-knowledge to judge and guide appropriate action in regards to the implementation of grassroots and civil society peacebuilding. Consequently, this priority placed on context has implications not only for theory but also for practice. While it may be a common-place practice in professionalised peacebuilding to take 'context-sensitive' approach, this conceptualisation falls far short of what the research is suggesting has been important to facilitate change processes. Practitioners interviewed for this research identified that context played a much larger and determinant role in practice. Indeed, context-knowledge as demonstrated in this research was much

richer, as it also contained tacit forms of knowledge- producing a more nuanced dimension than commonly understood. A more nuanced grasp of context may explain resistance to 'templates,' the lack of uniformity in approaches, and a view that what might work in one context may not work for another, and as mentioned earlier, why the peacebuilding sector has appeared incoherent and inconsistent.

However, the conceptualisation of phronesis has brought clarity and coherence to the incoherence. This thesis concludes that given the prevalence of a phronetic epistemology of practice in Northern Ireland, the quest for uniformity in peacebuilding is itself neither desirable nor likely possible. Stathis Kalyvas, in his tome, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War* argues that civil wars themselves lack uniformity. Locales differ in the impact and patterns of violence as a result of contextual micro-dynamics such as population density and micro-relationships that differ from one area to the next (Kalyvas, 2006). Individuals in Northern Ireland have not had a uniform experience of conflict (Fay et al., 1999). This may signify and necessitate a lack of uniformity in peacebuilding. The implications of embracing an idiographic versus nomothetic approach to peacebuilding however, may risk looking incoherent and muddled, because it legitimises different approaches being used across differing contexts. In an intriguing presentation made to the Conflict Research Society annual conference in September 2016, Kalyvas made a further comparison. Reflecting on recent breakthroughs in cancer research which use immunotherapy to treat cancer's particularistic nature, he reflected that perhaps civil wars should be viewed similarly. Taking this to the next logical step further, if conflicts can be viewed as idiographic in nature, presumably peacebuilding may also need a similarly particular and idiographic approach. Scholars such as Chandler (2017) suggest that increasingly there has been a shift, even at the level of UN peacebuilding, towards what he describes as a pragmatist orientation which recognises greater fluidity, non-linearity and the context-specific nature of conflict (Chandler, 2017).

Research undertaken in 2014 across six interface areas in Derry-Londonderry makes a similar such recommendation. The research investigated what might be needed to begin to consider the removal of peace walls and to increase positive relationships

across interface divides. The first key finding was that: “The lack of uniformity in responses for almost all the questions evidence the need for tailored approaches to each community according to their specific needs” (St. Columb’s Park House, 2014). The point was reinforced by a further key finding in respect to the issue of the flying of flags and painting of kerbstones, suggesting that “[T]here is a need to discuss these practices on an area by area basis to ensure that communities views on the issues are being considered when formulating policy on the issues” (ibid). While the practice and policy implications of such an approach may be challenging, the research suggests that it may be beneficial to build in flexibility within peacebuilding approaches to accommodate differences across contexts. Reflecting the five dimension of context identified in this research as the phronetic lenses (place-space, frame, time-timing, fault lines and relationship) this view of conflict contains nuance. Therefore, suggesting that in a given locale, a tailored approach that retains flexibility is actually necessary to move that particular context forward.

Finally, the conceptualisation of phronesis makes visible why there is discomfort about the current techno-rational professional peacebuilding paradigm. Concepts such as peacebuilding, at their core are concerned with relationships or action for ‘well-being’ and ‘human flourishing’, as Aristotle suggests, perhaps can never be truly understood purely as techne or episteme. Such a paradigm transforms organic process-driven relational concepts into techno-rational instruments. Hamber and Kelly (2008), writing about the adoption of the five-strand model of reconciliation as an instrument for funding purposes in 2008, reflect that the model began to be viewed by those receiving funding as a hoop-jumping exercise and less for its potential for analysis:

> “[B]ut for many community and voluntary groups their primary view of the definition is now fairly mechanical and funding driven. They are interested in the definition in so far as it might impact on their funding application rather than reflecting on its wider applicability and assessing their approach to reconciliation” (Hamber and Kelly, 2008 p.15).

Thus, while practitioners on the whole evidenced a valuing of phronetic forms of knowledge, and a phronetic way of thinking about their practice, their responses suggested that they are operating in a paradigm, particularly in regards to funding,

monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, that does not. Concepts such as reconciliation originally developed to represent a fluid, dynamic and organic relational processes runs the risk of becoming a technocratic yardstick.

There are however, signs that more phronetic oriented paradigms could emerge. For example, as mentioned above, Chandler summarising a recent review report produced by the UN of the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture reflects that there has been a more recent shift in language and a recognition that previous approaches were "overly technocratic" (Chandler 2017 p. 7 citing UN, 2015 p.12). Chandler writes:

> Today, the UN argues that peacebuilding needs to be replaced by a more general and amorphous conception of 'sustaining peace'….rather than peacebuilding occurring after conflict, problems have to be engaged with along an 'arc' or continuum, from prevention to reconstruction: sustaining peace is a complex process not a set of discrete linear stages…" (Chandler, 2017 p. 8).

Phronetic peacebuilders may find this to be an encouraging trend if critiques of 'technocratic' approaches continue to gain traction. For example, a preliminary investigation identifies a similar development in social change philanthropy-described as 'emergent philanthropy'. 'Emergent philanthropy' seeks to move away from 'strategic philanthropy' because it is not viewed as a good fit for the complexity of social change. Strategic philanthropy is critiqued as a "cut-and-dried approach – clear goals, data-driven strategies, heightened accountability and rigorous evaluations – [that] doesn't fit the complexities of social change" (Hartnell et al., 2014). An emergent approach may be a better fit for those working phronetically.

As an example, Catalyst for Peace, a small philanthropy based in Portland Maine, USA, has explicitly taken forward this emergent approach. Funding just one project, Fambul Tok, a locally-led reconciliation and dialogue program in Sierra Leone over a long-term timeframe, they describe their philosophy of funding driven by the belief that those who are most impacted by violence and conflict have both capacity and the wisdom necessary to determine (suggestive of Autessere's term "authoring")

their own peacebuilding. Summarising their philosophy of funding, it is to create space in several ways: by developing and empowering 'potential' with a focus on process not only product, by funding the building of conceptual and organisation platforms of local authorship, committing to long-term and flexible funding which involves recipients in decision-making about funding decisions, funding across firewalls to generate honest dialogue between funders, involving both practitioners and recipients to encourage mutual learning, and finally to fund in ways that allow for genuine connection rather than prioritizing money (Catalyst for Peace, 2017). As Catalyst for Peace organisational literature states:

> "Mobilizing local solutions isn't outside experts swooping to tell people what to do (or worse, doing it for them). What is needed is a way for local wisdom, will, expertise and leadership to emerge and grow. Those outside the local community have a critical role: to create space for the local resources, knowledge, and capacities to be mobilized and manifested. And when local leaders and outside partners work together in ways that honor the wisdom, resources and capacities of both, the results are transformative- for all parties. This is how we build peace: from the inside-out" (Catalyst for Peace, 2017).

Approaches to funding such as those taken by Catalyst for Peace are encouraging for multiple reasons when considering ways to use phronetic knowledge, one in particular, is however is worth highlighting. Given that phronesis is developed through trial and error and experimentation, such long-term commitment and flexibility allows for learning from failure. Peacebuilding needs failure in order to learn. However, when failure is penalised, learning is stunted. Furthermore, when peacebuilding is viewed as only 'service delivery' (an increasingly prevalent trend in professionalised peacebuilding in Northern Ireland) peace runs the risk of being viewed as only techne, a product. Peace, when viewed as a 'product' may increase the likelihood for risk avoidance for fear of project 'failure.' Consequently, the space for learning from such failures is subsequently lost- a detriment to both practice and theory alike.

9.3 Future avenues for research and conclusions

From the outset this research was motivated by the desire to learn from the lived experience and practice of those who had worked to build peace within grassroots communities and in civil society. It was an attempt to rectify what had been identified as a deficit, a contention those with practical skills and knowledge were not being valued or included in knowledge production. In the desire to build theory (episteme) with practitioners, the research uncovered phronesis, practical wisdom. Built over time and gained by embodied and embedded experience, evidence was provided that such knowledge contained deep understandings of patterns of context, learned both explicitly and tacitly but important for navigating and promoting peacebuilding change processes while living and working in a deeply divided context. The concept was demonstrated to produce knowledge that could be used to explain judgment, innovate for change, provide a lens of analysis, and to build locally-based theory. Furthermore, phronesis was shown as an epistemology that may be germane to conflict regions, and which might more easily adapt to the fluid, complex and emergent dynamics of societies transitioning from protracted violence and conflict.

However, the research also evidenced current tensions in maximising the knowledge production potential of those who use a phronetic approach as their predominant epistemology of practice. This is because it runs counter to the current technocratic paradigm of peacebuilding. Furthermore, this paradigm is a part of a much wider phenomenon and can be viewed as a global trend, and in many respects it could be argued, is an outgrowth of neoliberalism. Measurability, hard data, and quantifiable outcomes are valued in a diversity of arenas, fuelling drives in education to produce test results or within higher education for accreditation purposes, to demonstrate impact, all which serve to make airtight cases of 'value for money.' Public sector spending similarly relies on demonstrating value for programmes dependent on the public purse. While necessary and desirable, unfortunately such a reductionist view of accountability lends itself to bureaucratic number crunching focusing on outputs but is more demonstrably problematic when

it comes to peacebuilding practice. In this research, the majority of interviewees viewed peacebuilding as an inherently more organic, failure-prone, risky, unpredictable and process-driven endeavour. This is not said to belabour points made earlier about technocratic and bureaucratic driven peacebuilding, only to say that if phronetic forms of knowledge were to be afforded greater value, it may necessitate a shift in current definitions, practices and measures of accountability.

For example, phronesis is conceptualised here as including both objective and subjective forms of knowledge which are valuable when determining the 'judgment-in-context-for action.' However, judgment consequently may include aspects of context knowledge that are not easy to define or to account for within traditional monitoring or evaluation criteria. This research found examples when 'the space closed down' for peacebuilding due to micro-macro context dynamics such as the flag dispute or tensions along conflict prone interfaces. One interviewee reflected that work in their area was effectively halted for six months, with all activity having to halt due to the impact of issues generated by the localised context. In that example, the practitioner was able to explain why project targets weren't met. At other times, it may be more difficult to understand why ideas that seem feasible on paper, don't generate any interest on the ground. Within a techno-rational paradigm of accountability, where risk is costly or includes financial penalties, risk is either avoided or practitioners may learn to lie to funders. Neither serves to generate innovation or learning from failure.

Future research could, however, strengthen recognition for the value of phronetic epistemologies of practice. Rather than prioritising 'service delivery' functions, evidence of the strength of phronesis as a source of knowledge necessary for peacebuilding could enhance opportunities for practice to be equally viewed as an opportunity for learning, reflection and knowledge creation. The further exploration of the way phronetic knowledge is necessary for peacebuilding, particularly in light of a focus on bottom-up and the 'everyday' could expand upon insights generated in this thesis. For example, the knowledge creation cycle demonstrated in Chapter 8 (section 8.2.2) could be used with grassroots communities in purposeful ways to build from their tacit knowledge to innovate in ways that might sharpen the

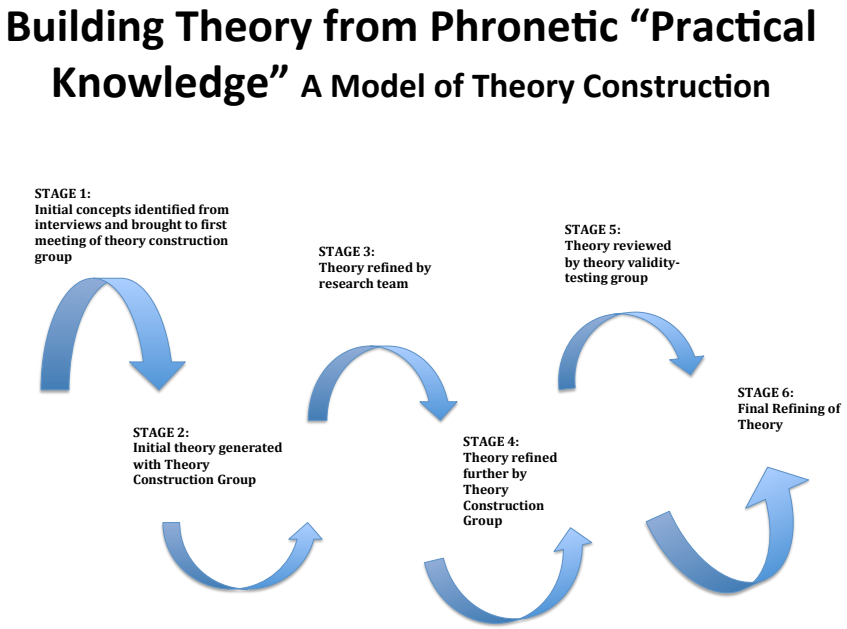
relevancy of local peacebuilding efforts. Working with grassroots and civil society practitioners to build local theory could also be further extended. As this thesis demonstrated, the pervasiveness of the context of distrust was ripe for theory building and while truncated for this research, the initial work with practitioners was promising. It would be important to revisit outcomes from initial theory building sessions on how trust and demonstrations of trustworthiness are used in peacebuilding practice. Insights gained could shed further light on mechanisms that could be built into policies to benchmark trustworthiness to compliment the focus given, for example, on strategies to increase respect and support reconciliation already included in government policy strategies such as Draft Programme for Government (PfG) (Northern Ireland Executive Office, 2016) and Together Building a United Community (T:BUC) (Northern Ireland Executive Office, 2013).

It would also be useful to take the conceptualisation of phronesis developed in this thesis to test in other conflict context to determine its robustness beyond Northern Ireland and to investigate its relevance beyond its basis of origin. For example, would phronetic context-knowledge utilise the same patterns of context identified in this research as the five dimensions of place-space, time-timing, frames, fault lines and relationships? Might other conflict contexts contain different sets of patterned tacit knowledge? Finally, building on from the 'Augmented Typology of Everyday Peace Activity' profiled in section 9.1 (Figure 7) such a typology could be extended through investigations to better understand the conditions that maximise or limit the potential of the 'everyday' to become a catalyst for transformation.

Moving towards conclusion, the conceptualisation of phronesis makes a necessary form of knowledge for peacebuilding, visible. It affirms that human beings have the ability and potential to be innately wise- a knowledge which at times can be obscured by the acquisition of theories and skills. Phronesis is a form of knowledge which is valuable and valid for knowing 'what to do' when techniques, rules and universal theories can not or will not apply. Revisiting the story told in the prologue, *Episteme, Techne, and no Phronesis* what I did not learn learn in my academic training but now understand- is to identify, recognise, develop and value all of these forms of knowledge- as each, Artistotle suggests, are virtues of knowledge.

Appendices

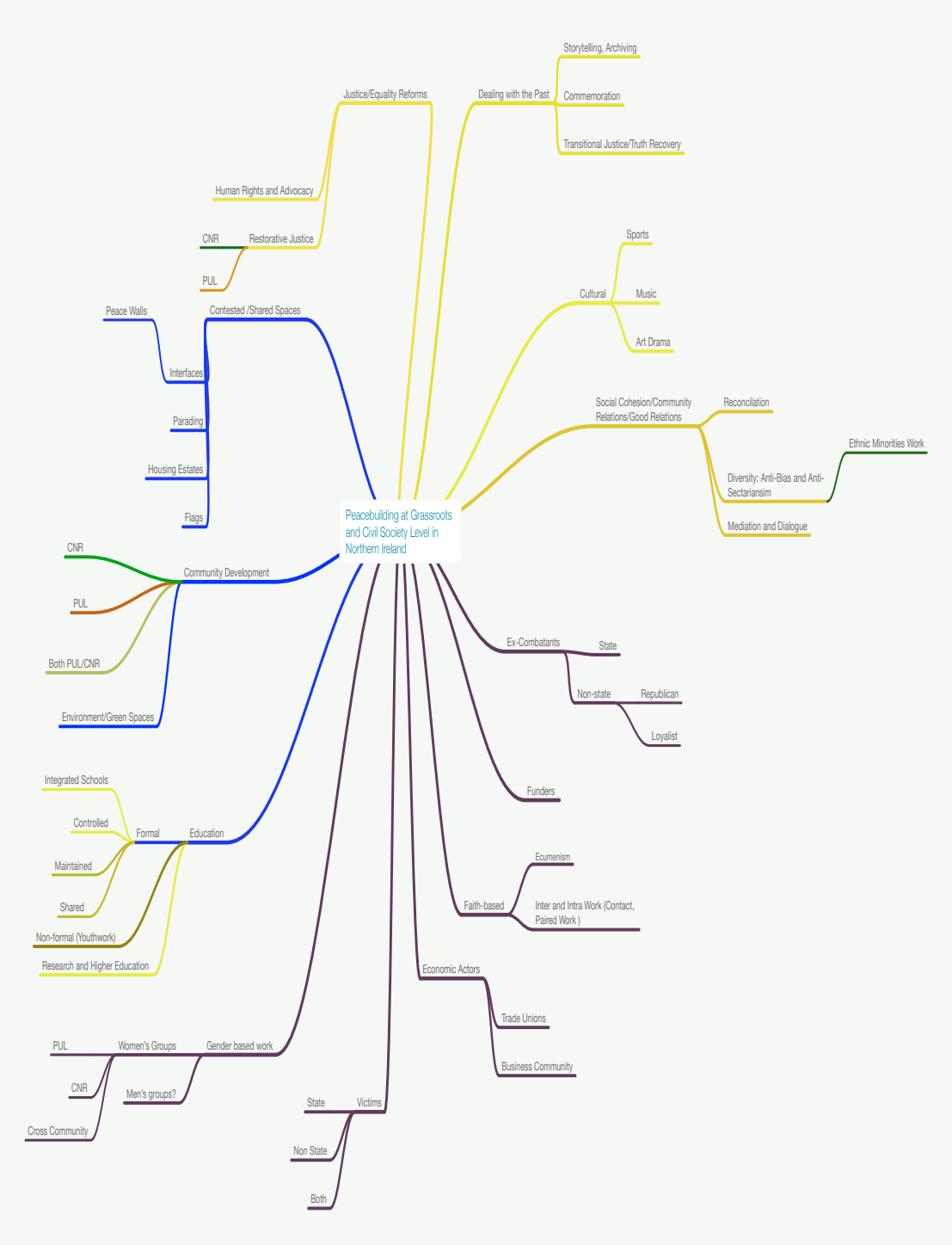
Appendix 1: **Adapted theory-building model (original from MIT Co-Lab, 2012)**



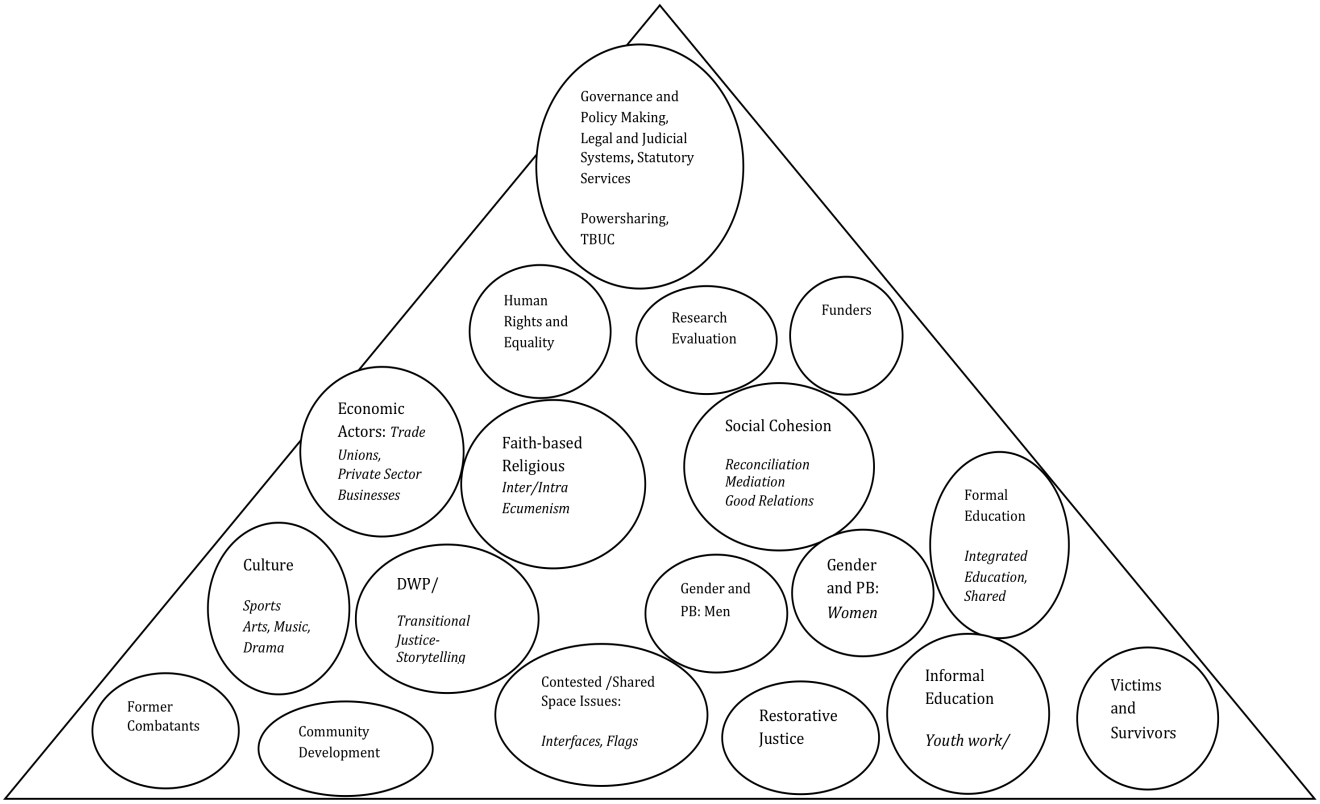
Appendix 2: **Timeframe of the stages of the research investigation**

Research Stage	**Dates**	**Outcomes**
Design Stage	October 2013 to October 2014	Desk-based literature reviewed Research question designed Ethical approval gained October 2014
Phase 1: Fieldwork Interviews	November 27th 2014 to June 17th 2015	40 Interviews completed Memo-writing
Transcribing and Reviewing Memo-writing	January to June 2015 August 2015 to May 2016	13 Transcribed interviews completed 27 Professionally transcribed and each reviewed for accuracy. After review, transcribed interviews sent to practitioners for approval.
Coding/ Analysis	April 2016 to September 2016	All transcribed interview coded. Initial analysis of salient themes for theory building identified.
Phase 2 Theory-building Theory building preparation Theory building meetings	October 2016 to November 2016	Theory-building themes further refined, mock case-studies developed. Two theory-building sessions with practitioners.
Writing up and revising	December 2016- January 2018 May 2018	Draft thesis produced Final thesis submitted

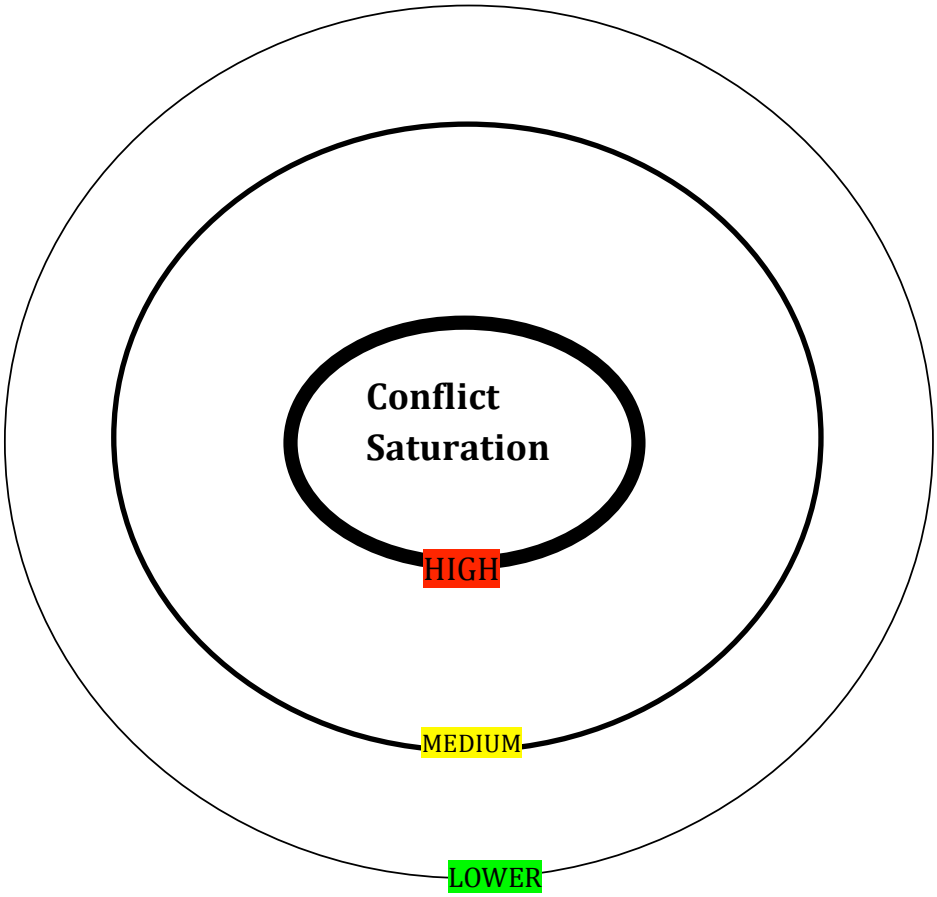
Appendix 3: **Sector-based peacebuilding map**



Appendix 4: **Peacebuilding sector and level map**



Appendix 5: **Conflict saturation map**



Appendix 6: **Interview questions**

Entry Points

People have entered the field in different ways and at different stages of the conflict here in Northern Ireland:

1. Can you tell me how you got involved in peacebuilding and if that is the term you would use to describe your work?

Methodologies

2. What are the main methods that you use in your work (practice) and how have they developed? What or who has most influenced your practice in peacebuilding work? (Models or theories, learning from others, evidence of success, values and beliefs)

3. Thinking again about the methods, what **types of changes** do you expect to see as a result of the methods that you use, or the way you work? Have you seen the changes that you expect? Why or why not?

Stories of Practice:

*The research hopes to glean from practitioners what they have learned **'on the job'** about building peace as a result of their work/practice. Sometimes we learn as much from failure as we do from success. The next two questions ask you to talk about your work, understanding that it can be sensitive, feel free to change any names/identifiers if you want to protect anonymity.*

4. Would you share a story of your involvement in a peacebuilding initiative that you believe worked well, and had an impact? [*This could be a project, programme, intervention, over any span of time*] Why did it work well, what impact did it have, what did you learn, and how has that learning affected your practice? What did you do with that knowledge?

5. Similarly, can you share a story from your own practice of when a peacebuilding initiative that you were involved with didn't go well, or didn't go as you expected. Why do you think it didn't work, what did you learn from that experience, and how (if at all) has it affected your practice? What did you do with that knowledge?

Change Processes

*The research also hopes to discover if there are factors that practitioners have identified as being **most significant** in bring about peacebuilding changes with people on the ground at the grassroots/community/civil society level.*

7. Thinking back to examples where you have observed changes connected with your work/practice at the grassroots, have their been factors that were important in helping that change to occur? If so, what was the significant factor and what type of change do you feel was created?

7a. If you were to use a metaphor to explain **your experience** of change processes (again primarily focusing on within grassroots/community/civil society) what might it be*?*

Reflective Practice:

8. How do you learn from your practice—do you have formal process? What works for you to reflect on your own work? (Conferences, supervision?)

8a. How does reflection affect your practice and how much do you feel in general practitioners here do reflect on their work?

Capturing Knowledge:

Part of the background to this research is that I was struck, given the length of time of peacebuilding initiatives (1965-2015), and how much money has been spent (just under 2.5 billion since 1987) it seems there has been limited conflict transformation and peacebuilding theory developed from local practice. My research hypothesis is that practitioners here have gained practical knowledge from their experience of working to build peace in a context of protracted violence, and that if consolidated, this could potentially build a locally-based theory of peacebuilding.

9. How have you built upon and captured your learning from practice, and do you think practitioners value the knowledge they gain from practice? Where does learning gained about on the ground peacebuilding get shared? What supports and impedes sharing practice developed knowledge amongst practitioners, academia, within social policy and internationally?

Mapping the Field of Peacebuilding in Northern Ireland

Analytical Tools:

Work that can be described as peacebuilding in Northern Ireland falls under many different names: community relations, good relations, community development, cross-community work, equality and human rights, and conflict transformation just to name a few. I have three maps that I have developed to map the field and the final set of questions will ask you to interact with these maps.

10. Using the triangle and sector-based peacebuilding maps, where would you place your work? Do you feel the maps accurately reflect the current field or is something missing or misplaced from your perception?

10a. Using the conflict saturation scale and reflecting on the majority of groups with which you have worked, what level of impact/saturation from the conflict would you say most represents the majority of these groups? 11. Using the sector-based peacebuilding map can you recommend other 'reflective' practitioners that you would recommend me speaking with for this research?

Appendix 7: **Subject consent form**

Interview Consent Form

Indigenous Theories and Models Emerging from Grassroots Peacebuilding Practice in Northern Ireland

Title of Project

Duncan Morrow, Senior Lecturer of Politics, University of Ulster

Name of Chief Investigator

- **I confirm that I have been given and have read and understood the information sheet for the above study and have asked and received answers to any questions raised.**
- **I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason and without my rights being affected in any way.**
- **I understand that the researchers will hold all information and data collected securely and in confidence and that all efforts will be made to ensure that I cannot be identified as a participant in the study (except as might be required by law) and I give permission for the researchers to hold relevant personal data.**
- **I agree to take part in the above study.**

Name of Subject	**Signature**	**Date**

Name of person taking consent	**Signature**	**Date**

Name of researcher	**Signature**	**Date**

One copy for the subject; one copy for the researcher

Appendix 8: **Subject information sheet**

Subject Information Sheet- Interviews, Phase 1

Study Title: *Indigenous Theories and Models Emerging from Grassroots Peacebuilding Practice in Northern Ireland*

You are being invited to take part in a research study being undertaken to fulfil requirements as part of a Doctoral Programme with the School of Politics, Criminology and Social Policy. Please read the following information and do not hesitate to ask any questions about anything that might not be clear to you. Thank you for taking the time to consider this invitation.

The purpose of the study is to investigate what practitioners who have been working within peacebuilding initiatives at the grassroots level and within civil society (between the years 1965-2015), have learned as a result of their practice. You have been chosen as one of forty potential participants to take part in the research because you were identified by either members of the Research Team (Dr. Duncan Morrow, Professor Brandon Hamber, Grainne Kelly and Emily Stanton) or by another interviewee as a "reflective practitioner" and representative of one of the sectors involved in peacebuilding.

The research will be conducted in two stages. This information sheet pertains to the first stage of the research and is inviting you to take part in one-to-one interviews at mutually agreed time and location lasting roughly one hour. The interview will be tape recorded with your permission as detailed on the consent form. Following the interviews, you may be asked if you would be willing to be involved in the second phase of research which involves participation in a practitioner reference group to test potential theories emerging from the stage one interviews. If you are asked to be involved in stage two you will receive an additional information sheet and consent form to sign prior to your participation.

The benefits in taking part in the research include the opportunity to reflect upon, solidify and validate implicit knowledge gained through peacebuilding practice. It is hoped that lessons learned locally can also potentially amplify practitioner-based input on relevant social policy implementation, and/or affect future funding processes and procedures to enhance local practice. It is also expected that analytical materials and models will emerge from the research that could be useful to practitioners in their work and opportunities for future collaboration will be

welcomed, with all efforts made to share and disseminate findings locally in keeping with University Intellectual Property Rights agreement. Likewise, any practitioner who would wish to receive copies or the final thesis, or relevant chapters, will be provided with them.

It is not anticipated that any significant risk will be involved in participating in this research. Those taking part are able to withdraw from the study at any time. The University of Ulster has procedures in place for reporting, investigating, recording, and handling adverse events and complaints are taken seriously and should be made to the Chief Investigator, Duncan Morrow, or directly to the University of Ulster. All data will be held securely and in confidence and any identifiers will be removed prior to publication as required under Data Protection legislation. At the conclusion of the study, all recorded interviews will be stored on-site at the University of Ulster per research ethic protocols. However freedom of information legislation will allow access to certain non-personal or generalized data. Likewise it should be understood that where criminal behaviour likely to harm others is disclosed researchers have a duty to report this to the police.
Thank you for considering participating in this research.

Contact details for those involved with the study are:

Investigator: Emily Stanton PhD Doctoral Candidate: Stanton-E@email.ulster.ac.uk

Supervisory Investigators: Dr. Duncan Morrow: dj.morrow@ulster.ac.uk, Professor Brandon Hamber: b.hamber@ulster.ac.uk, and Ms Grainne Kelly: g.kelly@ulster.ac.uk

Appendix 9: **Consent form theory development reference group**

Theory Development Reference Group Consent Form

Indigenous Theories and Models Emerging from Grassroots Peacebuilding Practice in Northern Ireland

Title of Project

Duncan Morrow, Senior Lecturer of Politics, University of Ulster

Name of Chief Investigator

- **I confirm that I have been given and have read and understood the information sheet for the above study and have asked and received answers to any questions raised.**
- **I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason and without my rights being affected in any way.**
- **I understand and consent to this theory-building reference groups meeting being recorded to ensure accuracy and to track theory-development stages for the research team. I understand that the researchers will hold all information and data collected securely and in confidence and that all efforts will be made to ensure that I cannot be identified as a participant in the study (except as might be required by law) and I give permission for the researchers to hold relevant personal data.**
- **I agree to participate in the Theory Development Reference Group and use the Chatham House Rule while taking part.**
- **I agree to take part in the above study.**

Name of Subject **Signature** **Date**

_____

Name of person taking consent **Signature** **Date**

_____

Name of researcher **Signature** **Date**

One copy for the subject; one copy for the researcher

Appendix 10: **Distrust/trust matrix**

DISTRUST /TRUST **FROM**	**TOWARDS INDIVIDUALS**	**TOWARDS COMMUNITY/ GRASSROOTS**	**TOWARDS ORGANISATION**	**TOWARDS STATE OR INSTITUTION**
INDIVIDUALS				
COMMUNITY/GRASSROOTS				
INTER				
INTRA				
ORGANISATION				
INTRA				
INTER				
STATE/INSTITUTIONS				
INTER				
INTRA				

Appendix 11: **Case study 1, Ballykillrural**

Ballykill Rural is a small village west of the Bann. Like many rural areas, its population is dropping, local jobs are increasingly hard to find, and schools are finding it harder to attract pupils due to the drop in numbers of young families staying in the area. In fact, several are at risk of closure. Its rural location has meant that over the years-- though it wasn't too far from the border, the impact of the Troubles was not as directly experienced as in more urban areas. This does not mean, however, it was not affected. Over the years of the conflict, local families lost family members and friends either directly or indirectly as a result of the Troubles. While the village is considered 'mixed' in reality there remains to this day a strong sense of division in part due to the history of harm that both communities feel.

Recently, a small community-based dialogue group calling themselves Harmony Now, has been established to begin to reflect on how they might overcome some of these divisions in order to revitalize their community. As part of this effort they have decided to reflect on the past in order to move toward the future. They have decided to look at local experiences of the Troubles with a view to trying to better understand how each side viewed the incidents that have impacted them both.

As part of this new initiative, last week they decided to organise a public event focused on Dealing with the Past. They put together a panel discussion to address personal experiences of the Troubles and their impact, this included: one speaker from a predominately Republican background will speak about how his father was interned because of mistaken identity, as a result lost his job and was never able to work in that career again. Another panelist from a PUL community background will speak about how shrapnel from a local bomb injured her and left her with severely damaged vision. A third panelist from a "mixed" background will speak about their experience not being able to visit family members who lived in the other community for fear of putting either family at risk.

Two days before the event was due to go ahead, the organisers received a call to alert them that several groups were planning to come to protest the event on the night. Gradually over the next 24 hours, as more people learned of the planned protests, tensions began to mount locally and rumours began to spread. There is even talk that ones from the next town over are renting buses to come protest. The morning of the event, members of Harmony Now! come to find that windows in their office have been broken and a threatening message spray-painted on the door. The police are brought in to investigate and now there are concerns that tensions will lead to localised rioting on the night. The event that was planned did not go ahead and was cancelled by its organisers.

As a result of the awakened tensions which the proposed event stirred, there is a now a new heightened awareness of local divisions, and a perception that as a result work that was beginning to develop-- is now threatened. For example, a new mums and tots group that had been set up between the local Catholic school and State school which had looked promising and started out with high numbers, has now has dwindled to just a few people, and the school Principals are worried about whether continuing the group is a good idea. The two Principals had hoped that this work might lead to greater sharing between the schools which might in turn bring in more money and shared resources and ultimately attract more pupils. They are unsure what to do, Harmony Now is also considering its options, and the whole future of this initiative is in doubt.

Questions:

What has happened to create barriers to change in this case?

What learning is there about this case?

What thoughts do you have about what might have been done differently or what might need to happen next?

Appendix 12: **Case study 2, Newtowncastle**

Newtowncastle is city located east of the Bann. It was considered one of the epicenters of conflict during the Troubles and its residents, particularly those in the North and South parts of the city, would have been highly impacted. One particular area Urban Island, became known for the regular rioting over the years of the Troubles. Historically, it had been one the first areas affected in the early days of the conflict, with a mass relocation of residents in 1969, and as a result, one of the earliest with a Peace Wall. The wall, which runs along the interface between Catholic and Protestant homes, was known for many many years as one of the most violent interfaces. The tensions were always particularly high during the marching season when local lodges and accompanying bands marched on traditional routes near the interface, though quite often problems occurred at other times of the year as well. As a result there was little inter-community contact, other than the recreational rioting between the young people of the area for many years. Derelict housing in the areas closest to the interface seemed to attract more trouble, and residents complained of feeling unsafe after dark due to the anti-social behaviour at night. However, over the last number of years things have begun to change.

Looking back some think that progress can be traced to efforts started fifteen year ago to get a speedhumps installed in a the main road that ran through the interface. That effort had been started by two mums worried about road safety. With the support of petitions collected in both communities, they began working together to get the Road Service Department to address the matter. Eventually after many meetings the speed hump was installed on the road. However, while there was a certain degree of success in achieving something for the area, there remained much suspicion, and regular recreational rioting for many more years. After one particularly bad summer 10 years ago, two teachers, worried about how this might continue into the new school year started to talk about what might be done. A sports scheme between the local Catholic and Protestant school was set up, and the children bussed to each other's schools even though they were at two ends of the same street. This programme has continued on for the last ten years and has even brought some of the local parents together. Several parents interested in supporting their kids have begun to get coaching training and are now volunteer coaches for the cross-community sports program. The teachers have also started a choir between the two schools.

Most recently, in the past five years other influential local community members, some from ex-combatant backgrounds have begun to work together to look at how they might tackle the tensions that emerge every summer. At first, even negotiating who would be involved in the group was challenging. Local Republicans were wary of talking to the police, and Orange Order representatives were also wary of involvement with Republicans. While local members of a range of ex-combatant organisations were involved, intra organizational feuding also created high suspicion. Everyone was sure the other had an agenda. However, in the end it was decided that a local priest and Presbyterian minister should act as conveners for the group, and it should include as many different stakeholders as possible. The group have been meeting every fortnight for the past five years.

After three years of difficult discussions, this group was able to negotiate a specific set of protocols for the sequencing of both the parades and any counter protests. Monitors were also put into place to ensure that each did what they said they would do. For the most part this has worked although there have been at times breaches of the protocol. However, these breaches were handled in the group, and people took responsibility for them. Several members of the group comment that they try to be as straight-forward as possible and don't promise what they can't deliver.

The fortnightly meeting has also included regular communication to report on any anti-social behaviour occurring between the communities. Everyone who was involved has been responsible for reporting back to and negotiating on behalf of those they represent, and each session includes a time where any unresolved issues get reported back to the wider group of stakeholders. For the last two years, this has led to peaceful parades and protocols were followed without breaches. Residents have started to comment that they feel safer coming out at night, and police cite a decrease in anti-social behaviour. While things are not perfect, Urban Island residents are beginning to experience some changes to their area.

Questions:

What has happened to create opportunities for change in this case? What barriers were there and how were they overcome?

If you had to choose, what are the most important things that have helped change to happen in this case in your opinion?

What thoughts do you have about what might need to happen next?

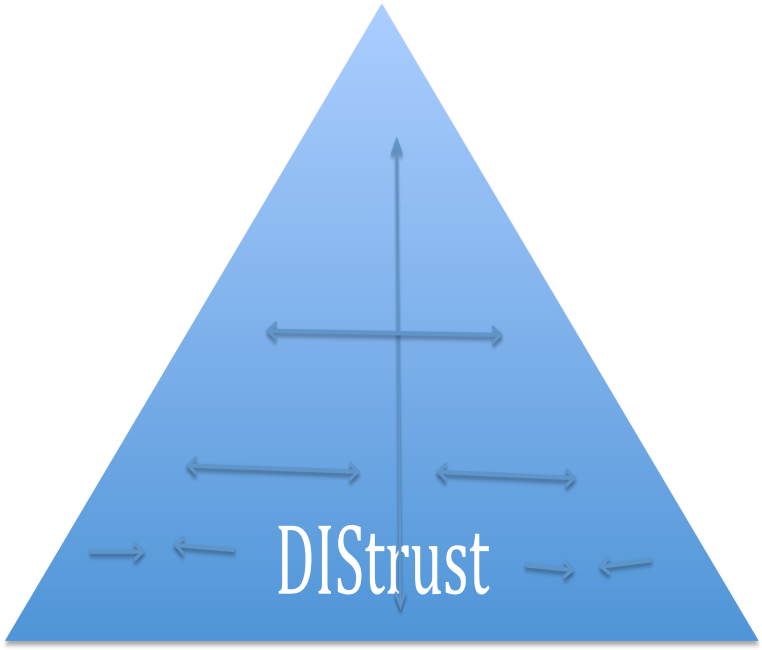
Appendix 13: **Theory building session handout**

Theory Building Session 1: November 25, 2017

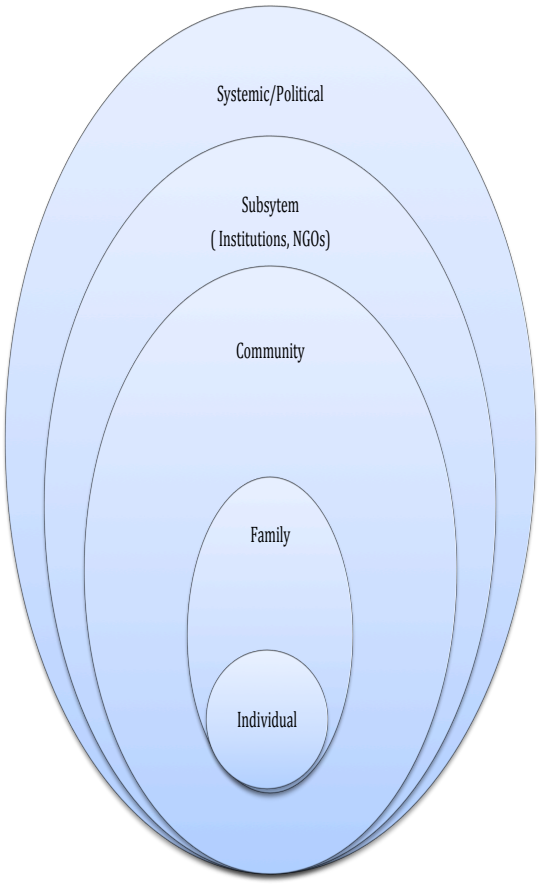
Ulster University

PhD Research: ***Indigenous Theories and Models Emerging from Grassroots Peacebuilding Practice***

Emily Stanton, PhD Candidate
IRiSS School of Politics



DISTRUST Permeates the System. Trust and Distrust----- Operate Systemically. Change processes are operating in a deeply distrustful context.



In the context of deep systemic Distrust, change processes were challenged due to multi-layered embedded distrust but catalyzed with an experience of built up trust, aided by a perception of trustworthiness and display of trustworthy behaviours. However gains could be disrupted by episodes/experiences of distrust in rest of system.

CONCEPTS to EXPLORE: Change Processes in DISTRUST System

Suspicion/Mistrust: A perception that there is a default wariness or suspicion that presents when presenting new ideas or new people, or embarking on change processes.

Betrayal /Disloyalty: A perception that fear of being perceived to betray "your side" acts as a barrier to change processes. Applicable to both institutions and people.

Pragmatism, Leverage, Gain: Practitioners refer to reflections that initially change processes are sometimes aided when there is a pragmatic reason to do so. This may involve anything from money, gaining more of, access to, or consolidation of, resources. Likewise, also involvement is perceived to have the ability to leverage other sets of relationships.

Credibility and Legitimacy: Perception of Credibility (including and/of Change Leadership): Someone in community who holds power either through their status or role or due to their personal characteristics (Pied Piper) or values which have established them as someone worthy of trust.

Legitimacy: Practitioners spoke about organisations gaining legitimacy as trustworthy. Access and inclusion (often by governmental bodies) were evidences of trust being extended from these bodies to other institutions. Perception that proving over time organizational credibility and integrity has been key in gaining that trust.

Perception of Integrity: Practitioners speak about the importance of being perceived as having integrity. Associated with an individual mostly but referred to process having integrity as well. A very important element spoken about by many practitioners was "doing what you say you are going to do."

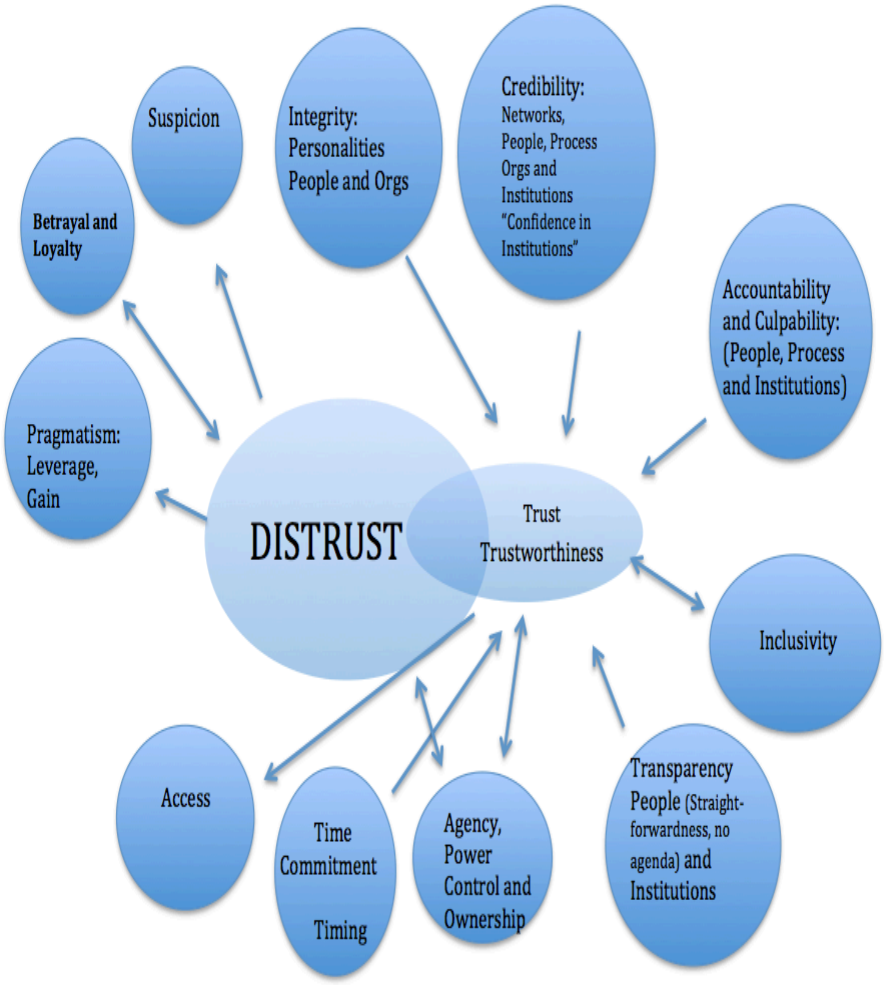
Transparency: Refers to openness with people about processes. Paradoxically--, a theme emerged that at times work needs to be "coming in the back door" or quieter, without drawing attention to itself. When being referred to in micro-contexts it was referred to as straightforwardness, being upfront, not promising what could not being delivered, and a perception that there was "no agenda."

Inclusivity, Inclusive Thinking, Access: Themes emerged that processes that were inclusive of a range of people, without excluding those who potentially might be seen as spoilers was important in building trust (credibility) in change process. Being given access to key people was interpreted as evidence of trust and of having gained legitimacy (see Legitimacy).

Accountability, Culpability, Taking Responsibility: Measures taken to formalize practices, clarify responsibilities, admit mistakes, and challenge inter and intra group norms. .

Agency, Power, Control, Ownership: Power utilized in processes or by people in order to facilitate ownership as expression of trustworthiness or to increase or maintain control in context of distrust.

Time: Time, Commitment: Reflections on the length of time involved in building trust and get to know the parties involved, time and commitment over time often expressed together. Timing/ Pacing: Refers to differences in timing of different parts of the system to engage. Recognition that a range of factors—internal and external influence when each group feels comfortable engaging. This makes it difficult to manage and maintain the willingness to engage at same sequencing point/concurrent pacing with groups. Under the radar may be component of timing.


Suspicion
Integrity: Personalities People and Orgs
Credibility: Networks, People, Process Orgs and Institutions "Confidence in Institutions"
Betrayal and Loyalty
Accountability and Culpability: (People, Process and Institutions)
Pragmatism: Leverage, Gain
DISTRUST
Trust
Trustworthiness
Inclusivity
Access
Time Commitment
Timing
Agency, Power Control and Ownership
Transparency People (Straight-forwardness, no agenda) and Institutions

Change Processes- Building Trusting Societal Relations and Trustworthy Institutions:

Data suggests that change processes hinged on whether trust was able to be built within the system in a number of dimensions:

- **Point of entry Trust**: Credibility/Legitimacy, Identity (initially the right one), Integrity, Rank, Pied Piper and Trusted Social or Family Networks) Sources of distrust (identity, networks) in point of entry needed overcome.

- **Proxy Trust**: Piggybacking on established trusted relationship. Likewise, relationship tainted (credibility threatened by a proxy mistrusted relationship).

- **Pragmatic Trust**: We can do business together yields material, symbolic or relational gain.

- **Process Trust**: Inclusivity, Transparency, Accountability, Taking Responsibility, Straight-forwardness and Honesty, Commitment, Ownership, Reliability, Exemplars, Empathy, Anticipating Worldview.

- **Personal Trust**: Integrity, Personality, Charisma

Appendix 14: **Photo from theory building session**

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